THEOLOGICAL
DISSERTATIONS,

By CAPEL BERROW, A. M.

Rector of Roſſington, Nottinghamſhire; Lecturer of St. Bennet's and St. Peter's, Paul's Wharf; and Chaplain to the Honourable Society of Judges and Serjeants, in SERJEANTS-INN.

Εκαστος εν ΤΩ ΙΔΙΩ ΝΟΙ πληροφορεισθω. Rom. xiv. 5

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M.DCC.LXXII.

TO THE

HONOURABLE SOCIETY

OF

JUDGES and SERJEANTS,

In

SERJEANTS-INN.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

AS I have the Honour to be connected with your venerable Society, in the Capacity of Chaplain, I hope it will not be deemed an Act of Preſumption, if I requeſt you to take my *Theological* Diſſertations under your Patronage; eſpecially as each of them has CHRISTIANITY for its Object.

That Serioufneſs and Solemnity, that devotional Propriety, which I have ſeen you exemplify, in our united Addreſſes

to

DEDICATION.

to the DEITY, are to me a pleaſing Demonſtration of your Zeal for that important Cauſe, in which we are all EQUALLY, all ESSENTIALLY intereſted.

I am,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

Your moſt dutiful Servant,

Jermyn-ſtreet, Feb. 25, 1772.

CAPEL BERROW.

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ERRATA.

DEISM.

Page 8. l. 12. dele *into.*
P. 23. l. 26. for the *colon* ſubſtitute a *full point.*
P. 38. l. 7. for *working* read *workings.*
P. 57. l. 10. for *examimination* read *examination.*
P. 71. l. 15. for *parts of* read *parts in.*

PREDESTINATION.

P. 9. l. 25. after *this ſaid* place a *comma.*
P. 12. laſt l. for *of peace* read *of the peace.*
P. 17. l. 16. for *interſted* read *intereſted.*
P. 21. l. 25. for *concluſus* read *concluſos.*
P. 23. l. 16. for *Novation* read *Novatian.*
Ibid. l. 33. for *collectaneus* read *collectaneis*
P. 27. l. 32. for *for is it ſaid the ſtate,* read *it is ſaid, be the ſtate.*
P. 28. l. 20. for *intreprid* read *intrepidi.*
P. 31. l. 26. for *always ſo ſenſible of the uſage,* read *alſo ſenſible of the ill uſage.*
P. 40. l. 39. for this manner of ſpeech *which,* dele *which.*
Ibid l. 40. for *I aſked* read *I aſk.*
P. 41. l. 20. for *the either* read *that either.*
P. 53. l. 20. dele *and.*

DISCOURSE concerning ORIGEN.

In the Title, for *extracts from,* read extracts from a *tract entitled.*

On CHRIST's DEATH.

P. 8. l. 26. for *imaginine* read *imagine*
P. 14. l. 17. for *was reſult* read *was the reſult,* and for letter 5 read letter 1.
P. 25. l. 26. for *former* read *latter.*
P. 27. l. 16. for αλλυποι read αναλυποι.
P. 29. l. 33. for *voluntatis* read *voluntates.*
P. 30. l. 1. in *acknowledgments* dele *s.*
P. 34. l. 31. for *fleſhy* read *fleſhly.*
P. 41. l. 25. for *originginal* read *original.*
P. 53. l. 20. for *alotted* read *allotted.*
P. 100. l. 23. dele *important topic.*
P. 130. l. 5. for *line* read *life.*
Ibid l. 9. for vain is that hope! read vain is that hope?
Ibid l. 19. inſert *ſouls.*

APPENDIX.

P. 150. l. 26. for *competible* read *compatible.*

ADDENDA.

P. 167. l. 19. for *reaſon* read *room.*
P. 170. l. 9. inſert *that.*

REMARKS

On the Right Reverend Dr. SHERLOCK's

DISCOURSES

On the USE and INTENT of

PROPHECY;

IN A

LETTER

Formerly ſent to his LORDSHIP.

REMARKS

On the Right Reverend Dr. Burnet's

DISCOURSES

On the Rise and INTENT of

PROPHECY;

IN A

LETTER

Formerly sent to his LORDSHIP.

REMARKS

ON

The Right Reverend Dr. *SHERLOCK*'s Diſcourſes

On the USE and INTENT of PROPHECY;

In a LETTER formerly ſent to his LORDSHIP.

MY LORD,

HAVING had an occaſion lately to conſider your Lordſhip's much admired Diſcourſes on the *Uſe and Intent of Prophecy*, and recollecting the pleaſure I had received from a former peruſal of them, it was with no ſmall degree of ſurprize that I perceived objections to the general tenor of your Lordſhip's reaſoning upon that ſubject, which had eſcaped my obſervation before.

Theſe, my Lord, I beg leave to ſubmit to your Lordſhip's conſideration, with all the deference due to a perſon of that exalted ſtation in the church to which your Lordſhip is advanced, and which you

dignify with ſuch eminent and extenſive abilities: * And that I may not treſpaſs too long upon your Lordſhip's time and patience in this Addreſs, I ſhall, after having endeavoured to aſcertain the Apoſtle's meaning in that much controverted paſſage, prefixed to your Diſcourſes, confine my remarks, for the preſent, to an obſervation or two upon your Lordſhip's exalted idea of *Miracles*, as an evidence of a Prophet's divine authority.

Firſt then, let us turn to our text——*We have alſo a more ſure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well if ye take heed as unto a light that ſhineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day ſtar ariſe in your hearts.* II. Peter, i. 19.

" The compariſon of the text, ſays your Lordſhip, is between the Word of Prophecy and the immediate Word of God—and according to this expoſition of the paſſage, St. Peter, who declares that he heard the Voice of God himſelf in the Mount, is made in his own perſon to ſay (for the words are, *we have a more ſure word of prophecy)* that the dark Prophecies of the Old Teſtament were a ſurer and more certain evidence than this immediate Voice of God, which he heard with his own ears: Now, in the name of God, ſays your Lordſhip, what is Prophecy, that it ſhould be more ſurely and certainly to be depended on than the immediate Voice of God? Is it poſſible to think that St. Peter, or any man in his wits, could make ſuch a compariſon?" P. 7.

Upon whom your Lordſhip means to fix the abſurdity ſuppoſed above, I own I do not clearly underſtand; nor can I ſee what could give occaſion for your Lordſhip to aſk, with ſuch ſeeming eagerneſs,

* The *original* letter was ſent to his Lordſhip the winter *before* Dr. Middleton's attack upon theſe Diſcourſes: Nor had the writer then the leaſt knowledge of Dr. *Middleton*'s deſign.

what

what is *Prophecy*, that it ſhould be more ſurely and certainly to be depended on than the *immediate Voice* of God? For St. Peter, my Lord, in the paſſage before us, evidently refers not to Prophecy in general, which your Lordſhip's queſtion ſuppoſes; but to ſome one determinate Prophecy in particular. What that is, we ſhall ſoon, I apprehend, be able to diſcover.

The doctrine more immediately neceſſary to be preached to the Chriſtians, who were then ſuffering for Chriſt's ſake, was the certainty of his coming in *future majeſty* to judge the world, and to reward *them* in an *after* ſtate, in proportion to the tribulations to which they were expoſed in *this*; and, "after diſclaiming all art and deceit,"—in doing what?—Not as your Lordſhip intimates, in "ſetting forth the promiſes and expectations of the Goſpel" in general; but in making known to thoſe Chriſtians the *power and coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt* in particular, "he proceeds to declare upon what evidence and authority he had raiſed ſuch expectations in them." Of this, he tells them, they had ſome evidence, when they were eye-witneſſes of his majeſty: *For*, ſays he, *he received from God, the Father, honour and glory, when there came a voice from the excellent glory——This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*, &c. But the criterion upon which he reſts, at laſt, the credibility of that predicted event, is —What? *The more ſure word of prophecy.*—And this *more ſure word of Prophecy* is—what?—"The *Word of God*, ſays your Lordſhip, to whom all futurity is known." P. 27. By which your Lordſhip evidently means, not this or that word in particular, but the Word of God in general, as it lies in the ſacred writings at large: For "the *Word of Prophecy*, ſays your Lordſhip, is not to be underſtood merely of the Prophecies of the *Old* Teſtament, for it evidently refers to the Prophecies of the *New*, and to them chiefly." P. 25, 26.

But

But this, my Lord, is conſidering this more *ſure word* of Prophecy in terms too general ſtill—it alludes, moſt unqueſtionably, not to Prophecy in general, as it lies in the inſpired writings, new or old, but to ſome one *determinate* Prophecy in particular, to which the Apoſtle, for their *immediate* comfort and conſolation, was engaging the then perſecuted Chriſtians' attention——viz. that Word of Prophecy concerning the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, which we read in St. Matthew's Goſpel, [chap. xxiv.] the completion of which they were to conſider as a ſure and certain ſign of the future diſſolution of the world, and of Chriſt's coming then to judge the quick and the dead. This was the *Light*—the completion of that event was the Light to which, ſays St. Peter, ye *do well* to attend, as unto a *light that ſhineth in a dark place*; a light which (glimmering as it may be) is the greateſt that our Saviour has been pleaſed to afford us concerning that event, greater than that which aroſe from miracles, or even from that declaration of his power and majeſty by a Voice from Heaven. For, as your Lordſhip obſerves, it is but a ſtrong preſumption at beſt, that Chriſt ſhall come again in glory, that we have already ſeen him glorified; but to aſſure us that he will ſo come, and ſo uſe his power, we have the *more ſure Word of Prophecy*, viz. this prediction of the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, upon the contingent completion of which, the Apoſtle reſts the credibility of that other predicted event, which would ſoon, as he intimates, be rendered unqueſtionable, not, as your Lordſhip ſuppoſes, by evidence ariſing from the Word of God, or the *promiſes* of the Goſpel in *general*; but by that more, or rather that *moſt* * ſure Word of Prophecy, the propheſied deſtruction of Jeruſalem in particular.

This, my Lord, is my interpretation of that much diſputed paſſage of Scripture in St. Peter's ſecond Epiſtle, which I could have wiſhed

* That the comparative βεβαιότερον *may* be uſed in this text in the ſenſe of the *poſitive*, without "introducing a *new* uſe of language into the text," various proofs might, if occaſion, my Lord, required, be produced.

not

not to have laboured under the diſadvantage of differing in any degree from your own. You ſee, however, my Lord, that I do not endeavour to defend thoſe who would, from that text, prove the evidence of Prophecy to be above any other, by which the truth of the Goſpel comes confirmed: The truth of the Goſpel is, I am ſatisfied, a point here quite out of the queſtion. But as your Lordſhip does take occaſion from thence to enquire upon what evidence the authority of a Prophet depends, and to declare, at the ſame time, that our faith in the Prophet reſts upon the authority of *Miracles*:—"That *Miracles* are the Prophet's *greateſt* authority," I will beg leave, in the next place, my Lord, to enquire how far that opinion appears to be founded in truth, or even from the tenor of your Lordſhip's reaſoning on the *Uſe and Intent of Prophecy*.

"Scripture Prophecies your Lordſhip, with great judgment, conſiders, as ſo many declarations which God has made concerning the future ſtate of mankind in this world and the next; conſequently all the hopes and expectations which are grounded on God's *promiſes*, and do not reſult from reaſon and natural knowledge." P. 55. And what frequent occaſion there was, my Lord, for Prophecy (conſidered in this light) the appearance of a deliverance from the evils, conſequent upon Adam's transgreſſion, which would otherwiſe have been wanting, clearly evinces.

The firſt prophecy, viz. that the *ſeed of the woman ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head*, opened to the world a *general* expectation only of a deliverance one time or other to be obtained: *When* and *how*, were particulars gradually to be explained by prophecies of an after date. In length of time, when the credibility of prophecies began to be diſputed (owing perhaps more to the obſtinacy and perverſeneſs of mankind, than to any real ground for infidelity) Miracles came in aid, for the ſupport of the Prophet's pretenſions——and hence it was that Moſes required and ſo amply obtained of God the power of working Miracles.

But

But if every Prophecy (of a public nature I mean) ſince the Fall was to be conſidered as an added opening of God's grand ſcheme of univerſal redemption, muſt not the credibility of each be drawn rather from the relation it bore to, and the connection it appeared to have with the *firſt* Prophecy delivered to mankind, than from *Miracles*, which might prove indeed the agency of a Being ſuperior in power to man, but nothing certain as to the goodneſs and veracity of that Being, or the equity of his claim to a divine authority.

And therefore, my Lord, if it is abſurd to ſuppoſe that Prophecy was ever intended for the benefit of thoſe in whoſe age the things propheſied are fulfilled, I would aſk how it will appear, from your Lordſhip's own account of them, to have been of any benefit or conſequence at all? For your Lordſhip ſays, that the ancient Prophecies were not apprehended, or clearly underſtood, by thoſe inſpired perſons who delivered them. P. 32.

My Lord, what difference there can be (as to any benefit to be derived from it) between a prediction which never came to men's ears, and one which, when heard, was not capable of being underſtood, I own I am not able to diſcern. Though Daniel, upon his extraordinary viſion, ſays, *I heard but underſtood not*, does it follow that he underſtood *nothing* of what he heard? Surely No. For otherwiſe (which in this caſe cannot be well ſuppoſed) he muſt have heard and talked without ideas. No; the caſe was, that what he heard made him deſirous of hearing and underſtanding more: to underſtand, in ſhort, every circumſtance concerning thoſe things, which he heard only in general terms, and underſtood not ſo particularly, ſo plainly, and ſo diſtinctly, as he could have wiſhed to have done.

And ſuch, in many inſtances, appears to have been the caſe with our Lord's diſciples, more eſpecially in that remarkable queſtion, *Lord, wilt thou at this time reſtore the kingdom to Iſrael?* They, we find,

find, heard but underſtood not: *i. e.* underſtood not the time *when* or manner *how* that reſtoration was to be brought to paſs, which our Saviour told them *it was not given them to know.* But can it be imagined that they did not underſtand what they *had* heard?

So likewiſe we have ſeen, or which is the ſame thing, have read and heard of, that life and immortality, which was brought to light by the Goſpel; and yet it muſt be owned that we too, in ſeeing, ſee not, *i. e.* ſee not into or hear all the particulars of thoſe things reſpecting which the Apoſtle ſays, Eye hath not ſeen (nor in this life ever will ſee) nor Ear heard—and yet will it be ſaid that we underſtand not what we *do* ſee, or what we *have* heard? With as much reaſon, I think, may this be affirmed as that the Prophets propheſied what they underſtood not.

The propriety of their alluſions, the force and emphaſis of thoſe ſymbolical, figurative, and metaphorical expreſſions, of which the Oriental language principally conſiſted, was undoubtedly, if not *literally* obvious, at leaſt critically, I mean, by the Uſe of critical learning, clearly explicable to all who either heard or had any immediate concern in them; though, from the want of that critical aid, they be not all of them ſo literally clear and intelligible to the unlearned of the preſent times.

"But our Saviour, ſays your Lordſhip, ſeems to ſpeak of ancient Prophecies under the *character of dark ſpeeches. Know ye not this Parable, and how then will ye* UNDERSTAND ALL PARABLES? If ye underſtand not this Parable of the Sower, how will ye underſtand all the ancient Parables relating to the Goſpel?" P. 35.

But what relation, my Lord, has this to the queſtion whether the Prophet did or did not underſtand what he ſaid? In the caſe men-

tioned by your Lordſhip, the ignorance moſt evidently lay not in the *Prophet*, but ſolely in the hearers: and yet to ſhew how neceſſary it was that that ignorance ſhould be removed from them (for they were to ſucceed him in the capacity of Prophets) our Saviour takes upon him to give them an explanation of thoſe Parables. The Parable is this, &c.

Here then, my Lord, is no inſtance in hiſtory to *prove* that Prophecy was never intended to be a very *diſtinct evidence*; and conſidering it (as your Lordſhip does) as a revelation, there can be no foundation, I think, in Reaſon, to *ſuppoſe* it; or that, becauſe many Prophets and righteous men have deſired to ſee thoſe things which the Apoſtles ſaw, and did not ſee them; and to hear thoſe things which they heard, and did not hear them; that therefore they did not underſtand even what they did ſee and did hear: Or that ſeeing, according to the Apoſtle's phraſe, through a glaſs darkly, is, in effect, not ſeeing at all. P. 31. For if by the help of a teleſcope, I bring to my view ſome diſtant object, (for example, a building) of which by the naked eye I was able to diſcover nothing at all, I may ſurely, by means of this glaſs, know what the object is which preſents itſelf to me, though I be not able perhaps thoroughly to diſcover the exact form, height, and ornaments, &c. of that building, but only in general, that it is a building. With what propriety therefore can this metaphorical expreſſion of the Apoſtle be urged to prove that the Prophets and righteous men of old, to whom the Word of God came, did not clearly underſtand the things which they were commiſſioned to foretell? And how, if they were attended with ſo much obſcurity, as your Lordſhip imagines, could they be productive of diſcoveries ſo eſſential to the purpoſed conſolation of mankind.

From your Lordſhip's reaſoning, therefore, on the *Uſe* and *Intent* of Prophecy, it does not appear, I think, that Prophecy was at all an imper-

imperfect unintelligible evidence ; but, on the contrary, that it was ſuch a light to lighten the Gentile world, as might lead them to a diſcovery of all thoſe truths, which it was neceſſary for them, in their then ſituation, to be made acquainted with ; and that the beſt evidence that a Prophet could give of the truth of what he predicted, was the accompliſhment of what he foretold.

But then it will be urged, that though the Prophecies, when completed, do give an undoubted ſanction to the Prophet's pretenſions, whence will ariſe his intermediate authority (for ſome he muſt have) before ſuch completion ? From his bare word of promiſe ? That, you'll ſay, carries not with it any preſent conviction.——It does not, perhaps, ſo frequently as could be wiſhed for, nor ſo univerſally as perhaps it might : Prejudice and obſtinacy will too often be means to prevent it. For this reaſon God has vouchſafed to open the eye of the underſtanding (oft times too wilfully ſhut againſt Truth) by ſome *ocular* demonſtrations of his ſpeaking to them, when the reaſonableneſs and conſiſtency of the Prophecy might and would, in unprejudiced minds, have gained an immediate aſſent——for I cannot but think, that the driſt of every Prophecy ſince the Fall, prepared the way for the expectation and reception of another——and that the one was a kind of key to the other ; and therefore, my Lord, in anſwer to your Lordſhip's queſtion, whether it be " probable that God ſhould work Miracles to humour men in their folly ?" I believe it may with great truth be affirmed, that in fact he frequently did : Witneſs that continual clamour for them among the Iſraelites, and his gratifying that people with them, often when nothing but the utmoſt folly and obſtinacy could have tempted thoſe people to require them——and I muſt aſk, my Lord, why, if Miracles bring with them ſuch an immediate demonſtration of Divine Authority and Power, did *Gideon* take upon him to aſk, and God vouchſafe to grant, any more than one for his conviction ? For one Miracle is a demonſtra-

tion of a Divine Power and Authority in the agent, or it is not: If, in reality, it is, an hundred could be no more; and all beſides, in the caſe of Gideon, muſt have been ſuperfluous and unneceſſary.

It is, however, to be obſerved, that as falſhood might and did put on ſometimes the diſguiſes of truth; and becauſe ſomething before the completion of his Prophecies was neceſſary for a preſent ſupport of the Prophet's authority, Miracles were, at times made the diſtinguiſhing criterion of *truth*, by means of which the Prophets of the Old Teſtament and the Apoſtles of the New, frequently ſucceeded in bringing men over to the acknowledgment of their authority.—I ſay *frequently*, but not *always*; for in proportion as falſe Prophets encreaſed, falſe Miracles prevailed, which, being ſometimes managed with too much dexterity and addreſs, not to impoſe on the underſtandings of many, made it difficult to determine, with certainty, on which ſide the real authority lay. And it is notorious, from the cool reception which many of our Saviour's Miracles met with among thoſe who were eye-witneſſes of them, what a precarious teſtimony they afforded of a Divine Power and Authority in the doer; thoſe in particular which he worked in his own country of Nazareth, and afterwards purpoſely diſcontinued, *becauſe of their unbelief*; not to mention the imputation they brought upon him, of his being under the influence and direction of *Beelzebub the prince of the devils*. Nor was all this owing ſo much to a total diſregard to Miracles, as to a ſanguine regard to a miſtaken interpretation of Prophecy: For though Prophecy cannot, in the nature of things, be couched in terms which do not convey ſome fixed and determinate meaning; yet it does not therefore follow, that men may not draw other inferences and concluſions from that meaning than are warranted by the Prophecy; for ſuch, in fact, was the caſe with the Jews: They were not ſatisfied to wait for that fuller diſcovery concerning the Meſſiah, which he alone was to make, but ſupplied what was left *afterwards* to be explained,

with

with ſuch conjectures of temporal majeſty and power, with reſpect to his promiſed appearance among them, which it was not in the power of all his Miracles to remove. Nor could they therefore, be brought, by any means (not even by *Miracles)* to acknowledge for their Prince and Saviour, one who offered himſelf to them under ſo low and mean an appearance as that of the carpenter's ſon.

Is not this the carpenter's ſon?—A queſtion which, as it intirely reſpected the evidence of Prophecy, ſo called, ſhews, at the ſame time, how ineffectual *Miracles* are for conviction where the evidence of *Prophecy* ſeems to be wanting.

Our Saviour, it is true, appeals to Miracles in proof of his divine miſſion, but does he not likewiſe to Prophecy ?——*Search the Scriptures*, ſays he, *for they are they which teſtify of me.*——And one thing which made it neceſſary for him to diſplay ſo frequently his power in working Miracles was, that the Prophets propheſied that he would work them, well foreſeeing that the perverſeneſs and obſtinacy of many would require them. But if the evidence of a Divine Power from Miracles did not always appear clear and unqueſtionable to thoſe who were *eye-witneſſes* of them, is it poſſible they can come to *us* with a greater degree of certainty ? It matters not whether they do or do not :—the completion of their Prophecies leaves us no room to doubt of the reality of thoſe Miracles aſcribed to our Saviour and his apoſtles, which will always ſerve to give them a preference to all other Miracles of an after-date; many of which are worthy of no other notice than as they confirm that Prophecy of our Saviour, *many ſhall come in my name, and ſhall ſhew ſigns and wonders to ſeduce, if poſſible, the elect.*

I hope

I hope, my Lord, I ſtand in no need of an apology for the freedom of this addreſs, but flatter myſelf that it will meet with, from your Lordſhip, a degree of candor proportioned to that deference and ſubmiſſion with which it is preſented by,

MY LORD, &c.

Dated November 1749.

*** The Biſhop in his anſwer, which was very ſhort, thanked me for the pains I had taken to peruſe his book, and for the candid manner in which I communicated my ſentiments to him—wiſhed he could give me ſatisfaction at large, but his hand was too unſteady to write a long letter.——Afterwards it became *unneceſſary*, as a more powerful antagoniſt attacked his Lordſhip upon the ſame performance, in public, whom Dr. Rutherford undertook to anſwer.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

WHEN Dr. Middleton had publiſhed his Critique upon the Diſcourſes we have been now conſidering, I was induced, from a peruſal of that work, to give a further ſcope to my thoughts upon the *Uſe and Intent of Prophecy*, which I ſubmit to the reader's peruſal, as additional ſupports of the arguments advanced above.

Though Dr. Middleton is far from being right, throughout the whole of his performance, yet he has advanced ſome obſervations upon his Lordſhip's diſcourſe, to which his defender, Dr. Rutherford, has replied, in a manner neither to his own nor his Lordſhip's advantage. Inſtead of clearing up the controverted text, and ſtrengthening his Lordſhip's ſenſe of it, he manifeſtly trifles with his antagoniſt, and aims rather to confound than to confute.

I own that Dr, Middleton is quite wrong in ſuppoſing the *ſure* Word of Prophecy to reſpect the truth of the Goſpel diſpenſation, and that the Biſhop and Dr. Rutherford are right in confining it to an evidence for the certainty of Chriſt's coming again in power—But the error, into which both have fallen, is their not conſidering that the text refers to a *particular* Prophecy given by our Saviour, *viz.* that recorded in the 24th chapter of St. Matthew's Goſpel, and not to the Word of God in *general*, or the *prophetic* Writings at large.

In ſupport of the latter of the two opinions, the Biſhop ſeems to lay no ſmall ſtreſs upon that paſſage in Iſaiah, chap. liii. 10. *He ſhall prolong his days* [have an everlaſting kingdom] *and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand.* But his own comment upon *that*

Prophecy

Prophecy ſeems, I think, to prove that it was by no means intended to predict ſuch a circumſtance concerning our Saviour, or if ſuch was its deſign, that it could not anſwer the end propoſed, *viz.* the conveying to the minds of the apoſtles' adherents a *ſure* and *certain* hope of its future accompliſhment. For, ſays the Biſhop [p. 70.] "the plain ſenſe of the whole paſſage appeared, at the time of the delivery, loaded with contradictions; but the reſurrection of Chriſt reconciled all theſe difficulties and ſeeming inconſiſtencies."—What difficulties and ſeeming inconſiſtencies? "Why, that one born to to miſery and affliction *here*, ſhould be the heir of an everlaſting kingdom; that he who was condemned, executed, laid in the grave, ſhould, after all this, prolong his days, and ſee the work of the Lord proſper in his hand."

But what is all this to an aſſurance of Chriſt's coming again in power. Thoſe who attended to *that* Prophecy, without ſome more *expreſs* declaration, might very well ſuppoſe the Prophecy of *prolonging his days* to be ſufficiently fulfilled by his aſcenſion into Heaven—that he would come down again from thence, and reviſit his people *here*, they would neceſſarily conſider as a predicted event, for the future accompliſhment of which ſome more ſatisfactory evidence would be requiſite, than what aroſe from the paſſage quoted from Iſaiah. This at leaſt muſt be granted, that inſtead of its being a more ſure Word of Prophecy, or ſome more ſure foundation for ſuch a hope, it was manifeſtly the reverſe; was far ſhort of what reſulted from the declaration of his power and majeſty from Heaven.——But to proceed——

Dr. Rutherford reduces his Lordſhip's account of Prophecy to the three following heads: There are ſuch, ſays he,

Firſt,

First, Whoſe language is plain and meaning alſo plain,—all beſides *that* differs, I think, as widely from the Uſe and Intent of Prophecy, conſidered as a *Revelation*, as light does from darkneſs.

Secondly, There are ſuch as are *plain* as to *language*, but obſcure as to the *meaning*——But what language can be *plain* that conveys not a *plain* meaning?

Thirdly, There are ſuch whoſe language is dark and *figurative*, and *obſcure* on *that* account.

I am ſorry that *this* ill-grounded definition of the more *ſure* Word of Prophecy ſhould have a *Sherlock* for its ſanction—But ſo it is—

Having mentioned ſome paſſages which relate to ſuch Prophecies as ſeem to determine the times and ſeaſons of God's workings, the Biſhop adds, "The caſe is very much the ſame with regard to *other* Prophecies, which are penned ſome of them in a very exalted ſtyle and *bold figures*, deſcribing the judgment, or mercies of God; repreſenting ſpiritual bleſſings under temporal proſperity; and oftentimes ſuch matters as cannot poſſibly admit of a literal interpretation: in which caſe, though we ſee the general intent and meaning, and find ſufficient ground for hope and fear from the ſcope of the Prophecy, yet we can with no certainty fix the preciſe and determinate manner in which the words are fulfilled." P. 34.

I never thought that an *exalted ſtile*, full of *bold figures*, was ever adjudged, in any writings whatever, an *obſcurity*; but, on the contrary, that it was conſidered as a more *bright* and *enlivened* deſcription: nor did I ever conceive that *figurative* and *dark* expreſſions were *one* and the *ſame* kind of language. P. 31.

Homer and Virgil, Pindar,* and Horace, abound in exalted and bold *figures*; but whoever conſidered *them* as ſo many obſcurities in thoſe admired writers! I thought that they were eſteemed inſtances of a *ſublimity* of ſentiment that was not capable of being expreſſed by a more low, common uſe of language.——Again——

"The argument from Prophecy, ſays the Biſhop, for the truth of the Goſpel, does not reſt upon this, that the event has neceſſarily *limited* and aſcertained the *particular* ſenſe and meaning of every Prophecy; but in this, that every Prophecy has, in a proper ſenſe and meaning been completed by the coming of Chriſt—the evidence muſt ariſe from a view and compariſon of all together." P. 39.

If a particular Prophecy is *not* limited to a *particular* ſenſe and meaning, I would aſk what ſenſe and meaning there can be in delivering ſuch kind of Prophecy at all? and what other purpoſe can a view and compariſon of a number of ſuch Prophecies anſwer, than to foment endleſs feuds and animoſities in applying them? When the ſenſe of a Prophecy is ſo very vague and indeterminate, who ſhall, with more authority than another, determine which to be the true one? And yet it is ſaid, "whatever Prophecies there are of a dark or figurative ſort, which relate to the Meſſiah, they muſt *neceſſarily* be ſhewn to be accompliſhed in the perſon of the bleſſed Jeſus, or he could not be the Meſſiah," ſo that though "a figurative deſcription of a future event will be *figurative* and *dark*, even when the event happens," yet unleſs you can from theſe point out the *Meſſiahſhip* of *Jeſus*, he is verily and indeed not the true Chriſt.

If that be the caſe, the Jews have as good an authority to aſſert, that the Prophecies of the Meſſiah are *not* fulfilled in the perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, as we to declare that they *are*—For as opinion, in this

* Pindar, however, I conſider as a writer of a moſt extravagant luxuriancy of fancy, and greatly exceptionable in what criticks call an *abuſe* of metaphor.

caſe, muſt be the only rule of interpretation, why ſhould the one have a leſs degree of weight in the ſcale of credibility than the other?

One would think that the Biſhop conſidered *Obſcurity* as eſſential to the *nature*, the *uſe*, and *intent* of Prophecy——For with reſpect to the Prophecy—*a virgin ſhall conceive and bear a ſon*—this was a propoſition, ſays his Lordſhip, which ſeemed to want ſome other interpretation than a *literal* one, which was againſt all experience of the world, and which wanted not the veil or cover of figurative language; for being *plainly* foretold, they would hardly, ſays he, for the ſeeming incredibility of the things themſelves, be received and admitted in their literal meaning. [P. 39.] Which is as much as to ſay, that if it had been poſſible for men to have *underſtood* the meaning of this Prophecy, from the terms in which it was delivered, ſome other words would have been found out to have *obſcured* it.—How ſuch a deſigned obſcurity in a Prophecy can conſiſt with its ſuppoſed Uſe and Intent, as an intended *revelation* I mean, I own I am not able to conceive. Nor is it leſs unaccountable or incredible, that the Prophecy abovementioned muſt neceſſarily be interpreted into ſome dark remote prefiguration, as it was evidently given for the particular ſatisfaction of King Ahas, and had received its accompliſhment in his days. And the application of that event, by the evangeliſt, to the miraculous birth of our Saviour, we may, with great propriety, conſider as ſpoken by way of *accommodation* or *alluſion* only——it being uſual with the Jews to ſay a paſſage of Scripture was *fulfilled*, as often as any thing happened to which it might be applied—a mode of expreſſion uſual with the *Heathen* writers likewiſe. Thus, in Ælian, Diogenes Synopenſis uſed continually to ſay, that he himſelf *fulfilled* or underwent all the diſtreſſes of Tragedy.——Οτι πασ Τραγωδιασ αρασ αυτος ΕΚΠΛΗΡΟΙ και υπομενοι. Æl. lib. iii. p. 273. Vid. Le Clerc and Dr. Sykes.

But to proceed.——In defence of the *ſecond* of Dr. Rutherford's *three* definitions of Prophecy, it has been urged, "That there are numberleſs paſſages, both in ſacred and prophane writers, where the words are very eaſy, and where it is ſcarce poſſible not to underſtand the *literal* conſtruction, and yet the *ſenſe* is very obſcure. For inſtance, Pythagoras's precept, Κυαμων απεχεσθαι. The words, it is ſaid, are quite plain, but the great variety of opinions about the true ſenſe of them, ſhews that it is poſſible that language may be *plain*, and yet not convey a *plain* meaning."

Κυαμων απεχεσθαι are *plain* words, nor does it appear to me that the *meaning* of them is not alſo *plain*. They contain a prohibition from the uſe of *beans*—the original *reaſon* for the prohibition is not indeed *now* equally plain——but what then? What if ſome ſuppoſe the prohibition to have been given on account of an opinion advanced by Pythagoras, that men and beans ſprang from the ſame ſort of putrid matter; whilſt others conſider it as an intended caution againſt too haſtily engaging in elections, determined uſually by ballotting with beans? This difference of conjecture, as to the import of the prohibition, is by no means, I think, an inſtance to prove that "language may be plain and yet not convey a plain meaning." In this caſe, both are equally plain, the language and the meaning of the words of which it is compoſed: I might ſay, the *former* is plain *becauſe* and *only* becauſe the *latter* is plain and intelligible. The meaning has, I grant, an *alluſive* ſignification, for the determination of which a *neceſſary* hiſtorical point of knowledge ſeems to have been in a great meaſure loſt; and it is obſervable, that there are, among the *claſſic* writers, peculiarly called ſuch, many expreſſions which, to common readers, are and muſt be dark and obſcure, becauſe the terms are alluſive, and the things and perſons, &c. to which they allude, are known only to the learned in the hiſtory of the times, in which the circumſtances alluded to occurred or to pagan theology. *Figurative* expreſſions in the *prophetic* writings are, to common readers, obſcure upon

upon the ſame account—not from the nature of figurative ſtile in general, but from a deficiency of knowledge in the reader requiſite for a right underſtanding of the alluſive ſignification, which the terms are meant to convey. For I inſiſt upon it ſtill, that *figurative* language is not in its *nature* obſcure, or to be conſidered as intentionally made uſe of as ſuch by any writers, ſacred or prophane. It conſiſts, on the contrary, of that which gives *expreſſion*, if I may ſo ſpeak, to language; like thoſe colourings in a picture, by a judicious application of which, the painter gives what we uſually call a *ſtriking* likeneſs of the *original*. When, therefore, a man has recourſe to *originals*, whether profane or ſacred, without having previouſly acquired the qualifications of a ſcholar or a critic, figurative language may and muſt appear to him dark and obſcure, but this does not prove that it is really ſo in itſelf. A peculiar ſort of learning is, in this caſe, required, in order to arrive at the writer's meaning, of which whilſt the reader remains ignorant, he, inſtead of receiving inſtruction or pleaſure from figurative language, muſt, on the contrary, be proportionally confounded and perplexed by it. Though therefore *Scripture* Prophecies may, from an ignorance of the genius of the Oriental ſtile, and of the *rites*, *hiſtory*, and *chronology* of the *Heathen* world, and the *Jewiſh* nation, come to the *unlearned* of after times, inveloped in a kind of darkneſs and obſcurity and ſeeming intelligibility, yet we are not to infer from thence, that the Prophets of old, or thoſe to whom their Prophecies came, were all equally void of ideas, as to the ſubject matter of each Prophecy; we may, on the contrary, reaſonably conclude, that they were mutually and equally animated and enraptured—the one in forming thoſe *expreſſive images* of their evangelical importance, the other in receiving *correſpondent* impreſſions from them.*

* That the contingent obſcurity of *Scripture* Prophecy is reducible to the rules of critical interpretation, the public will, I *preſume*, ſhortly receive a pleaſing proof, from a publication of Diſcourſes delivered from the pulpit by the very learned and ingenious *firſt* preacher of the *Warburtonian* Lectures.

Having

Having now finiſhed my remarks upon that celebrated performance, the *Uſe and Intent of Prophecy*, which aroſe more from accident than from a controverſial deſign, it will be but juſtice to my own judgment, as well as to the memory of the *Great Author*, to acknowledge, that, in all his performances, he riſes in general above the reach of cenſure; nor does *this* come attended with *any* other imperfections than what ſerve to remind us, that Infallibility is not the lot of Mortals, and that the Sun has its Specks.

F I N I S.

ON

PREDESTINATION,

ELECTION,

REPROBATION,

AND

FUTURE PUNISHMENTS.

ON

PREDESTINATION,

ELECTION,

REPROBATION,

AND

FUTURE PUNISHMENTS.

ON PREDESTINATION, ELECTION, REPROBATION, AND FUTURE PUNISHMENTS.

AMONG the various theological topics of enquiry, which have agitated the thoughts, and exerciſed the pens of ſpeculative controverſialiſts, ſcarce any, perhaps, have been debated with ſo much eagerneſs, and to ſo little purpoſe, as thoſe of which conſiſts the Diſſertation, upon which we are now entering.

The three firſt of them, which will naturally lead to an examination of the laſt, I ſhall conſider under the *general* term *Predeſtination*, and as diſcuſſed by the *Calviniſts* and *Arminians*, with whom the controverſy at laſt reſted, and which Biſhop Burnet reduces to the following iſſue.

" The whole controverſy, ſays he, may be reduced to this ſingle point, as its head and ſource: Upon what views did God form his

 purpoſes

purpoſes and *deſigns* concerning mankind? Whether he did it merely upon a deſign of advancing his own glory, and for manifeſting his own attributes, in order to which, he ſettled the great and univerſal ſcheme of his whole creation and providence? or whether he conſidered all the free motions of theſe rational agents that he did intend to create; and, according to what he *foreſaw* they would chuſe, and do (in all the various circumſtances in which he might put them) formed his decrees?"

Here, ſays the Biſhop, the controverſy begins; and here, I think, we *might* very eaſily bring it to an end.

That the all-merciful Creator could have no other *views* and *deſigns*, in giving exiſtence to man, than to make him *capable at leaſt*, of acquiring happineſs, no one will dare to diſpute, who doubts not of the infinite juſtice, benignity, and mercy of God—a ſufficient anſwer this, I preſume, to the two queries ſtated above, and an opening, at the ſame time, to an enquiry into the merits of the *alternative*, upon which reſted the Calviniſtic and Arminian controverſy; in which, though the latter of the two is not abſolutely right, the former is aſſuredly moſt egregiouſly, and even impiouſly wrong.

To imagine, with the *Calviniſts*, that God abſolutely *decreed*, before the *foundation of the world*, *eternal happineſs* to *ſome* of his creatures, to the remainder *everlaſting* miſery; and *that* merely in order to give a ſcope for the diſplay of his *prerogative*, as *Lord of all*, is to form in our minds an idea of *partiality* in Deity, than which there cannot be one more horrid. For granting only, what it would be a kind of *blaſphemy* not to allow, that God cannot but *will* happineſs *indiſcriminately*, and without *exception*, to *all* to whom he imparts a rational exiſtence, it neceſſarily follows, that if *miſery* happens to be the future fate of *any*, it reſults not from the *will*, or an *over-ruling decree* of Heaven.

The

The Creator decrees, indeed, infamy and misery to vice, and glory, honour, and immortality to virtue; but do those respective decrees *predestinate* or predetermine this man to the *choice* of the former, or that to the *pursuit* of the latter? Certainly no——nor can, therefore, either *decree* fix the *final* fate of the one or the other.

To this obvious deduction from *reason*, it will, however, be objected, perhaps, in the *first* place, that predestinating misery to sin, is virtually *predestinating misery* to the sinner; and, *secondly*, that *Scripture* authenticates the doctrine of *Predestination*, as advanced by the *Calvinists*.

With respect to the last of these two positions, which I chuse to take first into consideration, I beg it may be observed, in the first place, that there are only the following passages in Scripture, in which the term *predestinate*, and its *derivatives*, respectively occur; and, *secondly*, that in neither of those passages any thing can be reasonably inferred, confirmative of the *Calvinists'* reasonings from them.

For whom he did foreknow he did predestinate—and whom he did predestinate them he also called. Rom. viii. 29, 30. And again—*Having predestinated us to the adoption of sons*—and—*being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things, according to the counsel of his own will.* Ephes. i. 5. 11.

For a right understanding of these important passages in Scripture, it will be necessary to consider, what the Apostle had principally in view, when he penned those two Epistles, from whence the words are taken. And this we find to be a laboured proof of a *preordained*, *predetermined* will of God, to make the *Gen-*

tile world copartners with the Jews in the privileges of the Goſpel Diſpenſation. *Whom he did foreknow he alſo did* predeſtinate, *to be conformed to the image of his Son.* The Apoſtle had, in the preceding verſe ſaid—*We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called, according to his purpoſe* viz. that *purpoſe* which God had before noticed to mankind in thoſe words to Abraham, to which the Apoſtle alludes, and of which he would remind the Gentile converts.

And the Lord ſaid, ſhall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do: ſeeing that Abraham ſhall ſurely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth ſhall be bleſſed in him. For I know him, that he ſhall keep the way of the Lord, to do juſtice and judgment, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath ſpoken of him. Gen. xviii. 17, 18, 19.

From this paſſage we are made ſufficiently acquainted with the true import of the terms τους προεγνω και προωρισε, *whom he did* foreknow *he did* predeſtinate; and we ſee, likewiſe, into the force of the terms προωρισας, *predeſtinating*, and προωρισθεντας, *predeſtinated*, uſed by the Apoſtle in his Epiſtle to the Epheſians. In theſe places the words are manifeſtly alluſive to that prophecy, or *declared* decree of God in favour of the Gentile world, of which we read in the paſſage from Geneſis mentioned above; the ſole deſign of the Apoſtle being, in each place, to aſſure the Gentile converts, who were *not* under the Law, that they were upon ſimilar terms of ſalvation with thoſe who *were*; and would, provided they *loved God*, and *were conformed to the image of his Son*, ſhare, in an equal degree, with them the benefit of the preordained plan of *redemption by Jeſus Chriſt*; agreeably to the tenor of that covenant which, by the prophet Jeremiah, he had declared himſelf determined to make with the houſe of

Iſrael,

Iſrael, and with the houſe of Judah. *This is the covenant that I will make with the houſe of Iſrael. After thoſe days, ſays the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people. And they ſhall no more teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother, ſaying, know the Lord; for they ſhall all know me, from the leaſt to the greateſt of them, ſaith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their ſin no more.* Jerem. xxxi. 31, 32, 33, 34. This purpoſe of calling the Gentile world, we find likewiſe declared by the prophet Hoſea——*I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy: and I will ſay to them who were not my people, thou art my people, and they ſhall ſay, thou art our God.* Hoſ. ii. 21. In alluſion to all theſe paſſages, and others of the ſame happy import, the Apoſtle gives the *Gentiles*, then labouring under afflictions, this cordial to their drooping ſpirits, viz. an *aſſurance* that Jew and Gentile were unitedly *predeſtinated* to an happy immortality, *i. e.* ſuch of them as ſhould embrace the *religion of his Son Jeſus Chriſt*, and would regulate their lives by his rational and ſalutary laws. For *whom he did foreknow he alſo did predeſtinate, to be* conformed *to the image of his ſon*, i. e. thoſe Gentiles whom he did προεγνω, *foreknow*, or had *aforetime* determined to conſider or eſteem, in an equal degree, objects of his favourable intentions with the Jews, *thoſe* he did *predeſtinate* or pre-appoint to be *conformed* both to the religion and to the example of his Son. Agreeably to St. Paul's direction to the Coloſſians——*Put on therefore, as the elect of God, bowels of mercy, kindneſs, humbleneſs of mind, meekneſs, long-ſuffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, &c.* Intimating that thoſe pacific virtues were to be conſidered as eſſential ingredients of that religion, which they were *called* to embrace, and the characteriſtics of their profeſſion.

But

But to proceed——*Whom he did predeſtinate them he alſo called, and whom he called*, ſays the Apoſtle, *them he alſo juſtified, and whom he juſtified them he alſo glorified*——In other words—thoſe on whom he had *propoſed* to beſtow the benefits of the Goſpel Diſpenſation, he *called* out, or ſeparated from the reſt of mankind, for the happy purpoſe——and whom he ſo called he alſo *juſtified*, i. e. abſolved from the guilt of *prior* treſpaſſes; and whom he ſo *juſtified* he alſo *glorified*, i. e. gave them the *glorious* aſſiſtances of the Holy Spirit (for in that ſenſe is the word εδοξασε frequently uſed in Scripture) that they might be *called* to *walk worthy* of the vocation wherewith they were called, and by *that* means become inheritors of that kingdom, which was prepared for the *elect* from the foundation of the world.*

The *Predeſtination*, therefore, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, in the paſſages quoted above, relates *ſolely* to the Goſpel Diſpenſation; and *may* be applicable, as Mr. Locke thinks, to men *nationally* conſidered and not *perſonally*—to the Gentile World in general, and not to *particular* perſons. And the *veſſels of mercy* and *veſſels of wrath* fitted for deſtruction are perhaps to be viewed in the ſame light; the one the Jewiſh nation, then grown ripe for that deſtruction, which God had determined to bring upon them for their iniquity and incredulity; the other, the church, gathered out, or, as St. Peter terms it, *elected* out of a ſmall number of converted Jews, the reſt being

* We muſt, however, obſerve, that though the *call* was *general*, and without limitation, yet the *acceptance* of that *call* was then, as it is now, and has been for many ages paſt, *partial*. Agreeably to our Saviour's obſervation, *many are called, but few are choſen*—Many, both Jews and Gentiles, were *called*, who did not *obey* the call, *i. e.* did not come up to the *terms* of the call, and for that reaſon were not *elected* into the number of thoſe who did obey the call, but were *reprobated* and rejected; not as perſons *derelicted* or preordained to *everlaſting miſery*, by an *abſolute* unconditional *decree* in the will of Heaven, as the Calviniſts ſuppoſe; but as perſons who had rendered themſelves, by a contempt or abuſe of that call, unworthy to participate thoſe important benefits, it reaches out to us.

made

made up of Gentiles, who, together with the former, were to make up the *people of God* in the room of the Jewiſh nation now caſt out.

Upon this account it is that they are ſo frequently called in Scripture εκλεκτοι, the *elect*, conformably to the appellation appropriated by the Almighty to his favourite people the *Iſraelites*, whom he *elected*, i. e. ſelected from the reſt of the world, in order to beſtow upon them, excluſively of all others, the benefits of the *Theocratic* œconomy.

Mine elect *in whom my ſoul delighteth*, Iſaiah.
For Iſrael, mine elect, *I have called them*, ib.
And mine elect *ſhall inherit*, ib.
Mine elect *ſhall long enjoy the work of their hands*, ib.

Hence it is that St. Matthew, when ſpeaking of thoſe days of tribulation, which were coming upon the Jews, and from which the *elect*, viz. thoſe only who were *called* to embrace the religion of Chriſt, would experience an happy eſcape, ſays, *But for the* elect's *ſake thoſe days ſhall be ſhortened*, i. e. for the ſake of thoſe few *faithful* who ſhall *then* be *found upon earth*, thoſe days of tribulation ſhall be ſhortened——in like manner as *Sodom* would have been *ſaved*, could there have been found therein *five righteous* inhabitants.

If, however, any arguments ſhould be drawn in proof of partial *perſonal* decrees, agreeably to the Calviniſtic idea of Predeſtination, from the *predictions* concerning Jacob and Eſau, *viz.* that the *elder* ſhould ſerve the *younger*—or from God's declaration that he *loved* Jacob and *hated* Eſau, it is neceſſary to obſerve, that both circumſtances reſpected *temporal* bleſſings only, and were fulfilled, not in themſelves *perſonally*, but in their *poſterities*——And the declared

partiality

partiality in the latter caſe, implied only a predetermined intention in the Divine Mind to make the *poſterity* of the *one* his *peculiar* people to the *excluſion* of the other——and this in furtherance of a preconcerted plan for rendering *partial* decrees, in thoſe caſes, promotive, in the end, of that one univerſal good, *viz.* the redemption of man, on the terms of that Diſpenſation, to which thoſe *decrees* were apt *leadings*.

And to this *diſcriminate* predeſtination of perſons, to the benefits of the *Goſpel* Diſpenſation, the Apoſtle alludes, when he ſays, *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* In reference to the ſame *partiality* in the Divine Oeconomy ſpeaks our Saviour; *I am the good ſhepherd, and* know my ſheep, *and am known* of mine. My *ſheep hear my voice*, I know *them, and they follow me.*

And I give unto them eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of my hands.

My Father which gave *them me, he is greater than I*, &c.

And other ſheep I have, ſays he, *which are* not of this fold.

And again——*I and the children which thou haſt* given *me*, &c. i. e. thoſe on whom thou haſt beſtowed a ſufficiency of Grace to embrace the Goſpel Diſpenſation, &c.——as was the happy event to St. Paul and others; the Almighty *blinding*, at the ſame time, the eyes of others, that they which *ſaw*, i. e. *thought* that they ſaw, might be made *blind*. Hence it is, that in theſe our days, ſome nations are more *civilized* and bleſſed with a greater ſhare of Divine Knowledge, than others; that ſome have the Goſpel preached to them, and others are totally

ignorant of it; whilſt others take ſuch impious pains *(chuſing darkneſs rather than light) to diſavow, reject, and deride it.*

Whether, therefore, the word *elect*, in the *paſſages cited above*, relates to men *nationally* conſidered or *perſonally*, yet moſt certain it is, that there reſults from the will of Heaven a preordained partial diſplay of the bleſſings of the Goſpel Diſpenſation. And, as I have ſhewn above, thoſe paſſages quoted from the *Apoſtle*, (where, and where only the term *predeſtinate*, or its derivatives reſpectively occur) favor not in the leaſt the *Calviniſt's* idea of *Predeſtination*, it remains to be ſettled in what ſenſe we are to conſider that doctrine, in point of reaſon and revelation.

In reaſon it has no foundation at all; nor in Scripture, but as a Predeſtination of the Goſpel Diſpenſation to men, and of men to the Goſpel Diſpenſation—and this in conſequence of a pre-determined purpoſe in the will of God to conditionate the ſalvation of mankind, on a ſincere *faith in Chriſt*, as the promiſed Meſſiah, and the pre-ordained reſtorer of *lapſed* man to the favor of his offended God—forfeited, *as I apprehend*, by a prior aſſociation with the prince of the power of the air, who ſtill worketh in the hearts of the children of *diſobedience.*

There is no other name under *Heaven* given to men, by which they ſhall be ſaved, but only the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. *For God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life. For God ſent not his Son into the world to* condemn *the world, but that the world through him might be ſaved.*——*He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is* condemned already; *i. e.* the condemnation paſſed upon him for *prior treſpaſſes* remains in full force againſt him, and for this reaſon, *becauſe* he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.——Again, ſays our Saviour—*He that believeth on the Son hath* everlaſting life,

and he that believeth not the Son hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth in him.——Again—*He that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved, and he that believeth not ſhall be* damned*.

Herein conſiſts the predeſtination of the Goſpel Diſpenſation to *men*. The *men* predeſtinated to the Goſpel Diſpenſation are *believers in Chriſt and (negatively ſo) unbelievers*. The *believers* are reſpectively and perſonally predeſtinated to that faith, and, eventually, therefore, pre-ordained to *life everlaſting*.

Unbelievers, on the contrary, are reſpectively and perſonally predeſtinated to their *unbelief*, and of courſe, to a reverſe fate. They are excluded the benefits of the Goſpel Diſpenſation, and denied even the requiſites for obtaining them—are in a ſtate of *condemnation* and actual *reprobation*, in the number of thoſe, *in whom the God of this world hath* blinded the minds of them which believe not, leſt *the light* of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt ſhould ſhine unto them—Men, *who ſeeing, ſee, and do not perceive, and hearing, hear, and do not underſtand*.

But how, ſay you, ſhall we reconcile a partiality in Divine Providence, ſo determinate in its conſequences, as each *decree*, ſuppoſed above, is, the one to the eternal happineſs, the other to the everlaſting miſery of beings, equally meritorious, or at leaſt equally undeſerving of puniſhment and miſery, *before* creation, with our ideas of infinite rectitude?

Why, the decree, with reſpect to each, ſays the *Arminian*, is *conditional*, and the *event* of courſe not *decreed* (though the *means* were) but only *foreſeen*. Men create their own infelicity, in that reſpect, by their own perverſe abuſe of moral agency; by a purſuit of *vicious unchriſtian* indulgences, and a wilful and obſtinate *diſbelief*.

* Hear this and tremble, ye *Voltaires*, *Rouſſeaus*, *Humes*.

That

That event is likewiſe *foreſeen*; and what then? Is it therefore *irreſiſtibly* impulſive of means *neceſſarily* productive of the event? Certainly no.

But is not this, ſays the man of diſcernment, making a *diſtinction* without a *difference?* Will he not immediately reply, that as *future* events muſt neceſſarily be *preſent* to that all-comprehenſive eye of the Deity, who ſurveys, as it were, with one intuitive glance, all nature, all cauſes, and all effects, and as, therefore, an ideal view of the ſinner's *future* fate preſented itſelf to the Creator's mind, at the very inſtant he willed his exiſtence; will he not, I ſay, inſtantly aſk how we can, in this caſe, ſeparate, in our ideas, *creation*, from an abſolute *decreed* reprobation?

The *Arminian* anſwers thus, "What God foreknows will, however contingent, moſt aſſuredly come to paſs; nor can there be any occurrence, in the ſyſtem of things, which was not a previous object of divine preſcience. But it is from the right or wrong uſe of free agency in the creature, *foreknown* indeed, but not *foreordained* by the Creator, that this or that event takes place."

Preſcience, or foreknowledge in God, may be conſidered as an eſſential quality in *him*, ſomewhat ſimilar to what prophecy is occaſionally or accidentally in *man*——But who ever ſuppoſed the completion of a prophecy to be the effect of a predetermining, ſo as to make it an irreſiſtible or over-ruling power, in the prophet? It is not, that an event happens, becauſe the Omniſcient Mind *foreſaw* it, but he *therefore* foreſaw, or foreknew it, becauſe it *would* come to paſs *.

* I imagined that this thought, when I firſt penned it, *originated* from myſelf, I have, however, ſince found that the ſame *diſtinction* was made by the great Woollaſton. Vid. Wool. Rel. of Nat.

Though

Though therefore the Deity cannot but be ſuppoſed to have *foreknown* the remote fate of a ſinner, yet it can by no means be inferred that that foreknowledge fixed and determined what freedom of will muſt neceſſarily render *contingent*. If the actions of men are contingent, their future fate, which reſults ſolely from the nature and quality of their actions, muſt be contingent alſo. If the actions of men are not contingent, they are unalterably fixed, and if fixed they cannot be the effect of free will, they are then not the tranſactions of *moral* agents; and if not *that*, there is no difference between the *rational human* ſpecies, and the irrational brute creation.

But though foreknowledge in the Deity *fixes* not, or in any degree over-rules the will and affections of moral agents, upon which is dependent their *preſent* or *after* fate; and though God cannot be ſuppoſed to *decree* thoſe flagrant acts of a ſinner, by which his diſpleaſure is incurred, yet who can with propriety aſſert, that he did not *abſolutely*, *unconditionally*, and entirely in the *Calviniſtic* idea of predeſtination, *determine* the ſinner's fate, when he created him under an actual *foreknowledge*, that the reſult of that creative act, *would* be the entire ruin of the being created?

This is a difficulty in ſpeculation, which muſt ſurely ſtartle and confound the reflecting mind not a little, when applied, I mean, to the *popular* idea of the nature and *duration* of future puniſhments: and is, I imagine, ſurmountable only by a courſe of reaſoning which I ſhall preſently ſubmit to the conſideration of the diſcerning and unprejudiced.

To ſhew, however, in the mean time, the force of this reflection, in the ſtrongeſt and moſt ſtriking light, wherein we are capable of viewing it, let us ſuppoſe a departed criminal, ſuing out his pardon, at the day of judgment, in the following pitiable plaintive expoſtulation.

"In obedience to thy awful ſummons, my Lord and my judge, I come to receive from thee the juſt recompence of my conduct, during

during my continuance in that ſtate of trial and probation on earth, which I ſhared with others——the ſons of frailty and of Adam. But with what conſidence can a wretch like me, ſinking under ſuch an accumulated weight of guilt, dare to approach the Sovereign Judge of all the earth, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity? Can either this feeble arm of mine ſhelter me from his uplifted vengeance, or my diſtracted thoughts ſuggeſt one plea available to win upon his mercy? Am I not a ſinner, and that under the moſt aggravating circumſtances of guilt? Have I not obſtinately ſacrificed to the poor paultry pleaſures of ſin, the pure unpalled enjoyments reſulting from innocence and a quiet mind? Have I not reſolutely turned a deafened ear to all the kind warnings and expoſtulations of reaſon and conſcience, and ſet at nought the authority and threats, as well as the gracious promiſes of thy Goſpel? Have I not weakly as well as wickedly rejected the proffered aids of thy bleſſed ſpirit, ever anxious to aſſiſt me in a right diſcharge of my various duty, to ſtrengthen my enfeebled powers, to weaken the efforts of my wayward paſſions, and to exalt my ſoul to its native dignity and luſtre, a true image of him that formed it? Yes, alas! my own conſcience holds out to me a glaſs wherein I cannot help viewing, in a much too ſtrong and ſtriking ſimilitude, my wretched deformity—Nor would the gloomy proſpect fail to ſink me at once into abſolute deſpair, but that a glimmering ray of comfort darts upon my ſoul from thoſe bright and all-beauteous *cherubim covering thy mercy-ſeat.*" This ſaid the abaſhed confounded wretch all anxious waits in ſilence his uncertain fate; when thus tremendous ſpeaks the Almighty.—

"How dareſt thou, thou preſumptuous wretch, flatter thyſelf with one fond hope of mercy from him to whom thou haſt confeſſedly rendered thyſelf ſo wilful an object of eternal vengeance? ——Is not juſtice as inſeparable an attribute of the Deity as *mercy?*

Canſt thou then hope that the latter will take place in excluſion of the former? No——away from me, thou froward worker of iniquity——depart from me, thou curſed, into *everlaſting fire*, prepared for the Devil and his angels——What! ſhall the laws of the dread majeſty of Heaven be treated with diſdain, and no ſatisfaction be made to his *juſtice*, for ſo provoking a contempt of his power and authority?"

"No——that be far from me to expect, replies the afflicted criminal——but, with a ſigh that rent his inmoſt ſoul, may I not aſk, cries he, whether juſtice is not, in an equal degree, due to the creature as to the Creator? Forced then, as I was, into exiſtence, by thy ſole will and authority, might I not reaſonably have hoped, that an *everlaſting* puniſhment for *temporary* crimes would not have been the final iſſue of ſuch an *arbitrary* exertion of infinite power?

"True it is, I have ſinned under all the moſt flagrant aggravations of guilt with which vice can perhaps come attended——nor will I pretend to charge any of thoſe foul tranſgreſſions, for which I here ſtand ſelf-condemned, on aught but a moſt perverſe abuſe of means full ſufficient, if attended to, for the avoiding them. But as *futurity* is preſent to the all-ſeeing eye of Deity, will it be a preſumptuous enquiry to aſk, why his *mercy* did not withold him from an act of creation, the miſerable effects of which he was ſo ſufficient to foreſee, and of conſequence to prevent, had it ſo pleaſed him? Would it not have been more compaſſionately kind in him to have ſuffered me to ſleep for ever in my original ſtate of inſenſibility? A non-exiſtence to all eternity would have been a more eligible fate than *torment* to all eternity. Why then was I forced out of the calm repoſe of the one, when, in conſequence thereof, it was not only poſſible that I might, but certain that I ſhould, fall a ſacrifice to the awakened miſeries of the other?"

Here

Here will I close the remonstrance——*unavailable*, we will suppose, at last for procuring a mitigation of the sentence denounced—and thy reflections upon it, reader, are—what? Does the sentence quadrate with thy ideas of infinite goodness, justice and mercy? Surely no. Nor can the difficulty in speculation be otherwise removed than by concluding, what it shall be my business to prove not irreconcilable with reason or revelation, but provable, on the contrary, from both, that by the infinite *mercy* of God, and through the merits of his Son Christ Jesus, the whole creation will be brought at last into a right knowledge of the Deity, and an uniform obedience to his will and pleasure; that the souls of the *reprobate* will by degrees be so purified and reformed by some successive *fiery trials*, reserved for them in an after-state, that *all* will, in the end, arrive at that state and *degree* of happiness for which they were at first created, and the Creator himself be freed from the supposed necessity of sacrificing to his *justice* that more amiable attribute of his nature *mercy*.

And that such a course of Divine Providence will at the last take place, we may very reasonably expect, because the contrary cannot be made reconcilable with any one attribute of the Deity whatever, his *goodness*, *wisdom*, or *power*, more especially. If it is essential to the goodness of God, to *will* the final happiness of the creatures he brings into existence, it is no less essential to his *wisdom* to contrive, and his irresistible *power* to *effect* the means proper to prevent his will from becoming *abortive*.

Apply then this Datum, which cannot, I think, be controverted with any the least degree of reason, to the *denial* of the hypothesis above suggested, and the inference from it will be—what? Why, that God forced into existence a creature, either with *no* view to render him eternally happy, or that such was in fact his view, *but* that he unfortunately failed of either *wisdom* to devise, or *power* sufficient to enable him to *effect* so gracious and benign a purpose.

The ſuppoſed end propoſed by Deity in creating intelligent natures is the principal, if not the only circumſtance in this argument to be attended to: and the only material queſtion reſpecting it, is whether that *end* can in reality be *unaccompliſhed* without our aſcribing the failure to an unaccountable inſufficiency in one or all of thoſe attributes of the Divine Nature abovementioned.

To argue that the *end* of creation may be anſwered otherwiſe than from the *final* happineſs of the beings created, is to ſuppoſe that man *may*, and he may *not* after all, be the object of infinite benevolence. But allowing, as we neceſſarily muſt, the final happineſs of the creature to be the ultimate end propoſed by the Creator, in raiſing out of nothing intelligent beings, the time muſt come when the greateſt ſinners will, by ſelf-conviction and the conſciouſneſs of ſuffering the puniſhment due to their ſins, be by degrees reformed in their tempers and diſpoſition of mind, to a ſincere hatred of ſin and impiety, and to ſuch a real affection for virtue and godlineſs, as to render themſelves objects of mercy, and heirs to happineſs; or the gracious *ends* of Providence, with reſpect to a part of his creation, will forever remain *unaccompliſhed*; the obvious conſequence of which event will be, that Providence is, in his moſt glorious views, defeated by an inſufficiency in ſome or other of his *attributes*. Nor will the *preverſneſs* of the creature, whence proceeds that reſolute attachment to the cauſe of vice, which brings upon him at laſt his ſuppoſed *endleſs* miſery, account at all for, or make conſiſtent with infinite ſufficiency, the defeated purpoſe and power of the Creator. If man is untractable to his future intereſt, he is puniſhed for his diſobedience by his offended God, moſt deſervedly; but is the *end* of creation anſwered by ſuch puniſhment?—To argue if you pleaſe from, analogy——The *end* of civil ſociety, what is it but the procurement of peace and the general well being of ſuch *ſociety*? But this end, is it

anſwered

anſwered by the *puniſhment* of the *refractory* and *rebellious*, or not rather by the obedience and good behaviour of the well *diſpoſed*? And though an inſufficiency of power and authority may be ſuppoſed natural among men, yet who will ſay that the ſame is equally ſuppoſable in, or can eaſily be made reconcilable with, our ideas of the moral government of *God*? In ſhort, that extraordinary exertion of Divine Power from whence ſprung the moral or intellectual world, was *meant*, without doubt, to be productive of the univerſal happineſs of the beings created, in conſequence of a ſuppoſed uniform univerſal obedience of mankind to the will of their great Creator. In which conſiſtent view it ſeems not to me reconcileable with God's honour and glory, to be in ſo great a degree defeated, as the melancholy departure of numberleſs ſouls from *this* life implies, ſuppoſing ſuch their departure to fix their final and *eternal* doom. May we not more reaſonably imagine, therefore, that even a ſtate of puniſhment will be probational, and that the ſinner, when he goes hence, will ſooner or later meet with opportunities of appeaſing the wrath of Heaven? A life of ſin and impiety, not properly attoned for, will be undoubtedly ſucceeded by ſome other ſtate of exiſtence wherein the unrepenting wicked will, in a moſt terrible manner, be puniſhed. And the nature of that is in ſuch ſhocking terms of torment deſcribe dto us in Holy Writ, as cannot but awaken and alarm the moſt hardened and obdurate heart, when but ſeriouſly liſtened to and *reflected* upon. But then, if through the ſeverity of puniſhment, happily productive at *laſt* of the wiſhed for effect, the offender ſhall ſee into the folly of ſin, and ceaſe to offend more, ſhall he not receive the proper reward of that more proper conduct? The future puniſhment for ſin will be, both in *nature*, *duration*, and *degree*, moſt aſſuredly ſuch as ſhall give a ſufficient diſplay of God's *juſtice*; and the iſſue of it, in length of time, a courſe of reflection, of repentance, and reformation moſt certainly, which will open a way to his *mercy*. When the vengeance

vengeance of Heaven is become inſupportable, and the ſinner's puniſhment greater than he can bear, may not reaſon at laſt take place? From the fiery furnace of affliction may he not become purified from the droſs of *degenerated* nature, and be quickened into affections adequate and correſpondent to his celeſtial original; and ſo merit, by future obedience, the portion for which he was created? Would not an irrevocable ſentence to eternal miſery imply an act of ſeverity in the Deity which muſt neceſſarily break in upon his own happineſs? Undoubtedly, yes; unleſs we are to ſuppoſe ſuch a Stoical apathy in the Deity, as will diveſt him of all affections whatever. How undiſturbed he may be, (to ſpeak in the language of men) by any *temporary* miſeries his creatures may labour under, and that for their good, yet can he be alike unaffected by their ſuppoſed *eternal* miſeries, *not* inflicted for their good?——To baniſh forever from his enlivening preſence; and not only this, but to aſſign over, to a ſtate of endleſs and inſupportable torments, creatures whom he formed after his own image; to view them, with an unpitying eye, wallowing in gulfs of liquid fire, and lifting up in vain their hands and eyes for mercy; to ſtifle at once, and forever, the ſympathetic workings of the tender parent, and to ſummon up, in their ſtead, all the [illegible] mercileſs unfeelings of an angry, avengeful, and implacable judge; and for what? To reclaim and reform the apoſtate reprobate? To reduce to a due obedience the perverſe and infatuated rebel? To recover to him his departed reaſon? To purify his debaſed nature, and to ſave, at laſt, that which was loſt? This were a kind ſeverity, every way worthy a God of infinite mercy to exert. But to *puniſh*, never again to *pardon*; to *revenge* himſelf of, not meaning by ſuch revenge to *reform* in the mean time, the unhappy delinquent; to exert a mercileſs rage towards ſome, out of a partial regard towards others, is an idea of the Deity—how ſhocking! how diſſonant from his ſuppoſed nature,

ture, and the attributes of him whoſe brighteſt and moſt eſſential perfection is *mercy*, and whoſe mercy, as the royal Pſalmiſt tells us, is *everlaſting*.

Hear what the great Dr. Burnet ſays upon this point.

"Torments, ſays he, that know no end, can be of no benefit with reſpect either to God or man; apparently not to man, if there be no room left for repentance no *poſſibility* of being *bettered* by his puniſhment, no reſpite to his pains, or ſuch an intermiſſion of them as might perhaps open a way to reflection, and put him upon contriving how to alter his nature and condition. Let his puniſhment be, if you will, full of bitterneſs, or cutting to the laſt degree; be it continued, if you pleaſe, from day to day; but, for God's ſake, let it ſome time or other have an end, or I cannot conceive how it can poſſibly be of any conſequence at all." *

In oppoſition to which kind of reaſoning, it is however urged, —"that this world is our ſtate of trial, and the *preſent* life the time in which we are to work out our ſalvation, and that the *Scripture* gives us no hopes, that if we neglect it we can retrieve things in Hades †——that there are ſeveral paſſages in the Old Teſtament, which are inconſiſtent with any expectation of this kind, viz.

In Death there is no Remembrance.

* Neque Deo neque homini prodeſſe poteſt cruciatus indeſinens et ſine exitu. Non utique homini, ſi nullus locus ſit reſipiſcentiæ nec melioleſcere poteſt punitus, ſi nulla intermiſſio aut levamen ad reſpirandum et deliberandum de animo et ſorte mutandis—ſit acris et amara hæc pœna; ſit diuturna; ſed tandem quæſo finem habeat: aliter fructum ne minimum habere nequit.

Burnet de Stat. Mort. p. 290.

† Vide Horbery's Scripture Doctrine of Future Puniſhments, p. 290.

The

In the Grave who ſhall give thee thanks?
The dead praiſe not the Lord, neither any that go down into ſilence.
There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the Grave whither thou goeſt.
In the place where the tree falls there it ſhall lie.

But theſe are paſſages in Scripture upon which no ſtreſs can be laid in proof of the *irreverſibleneſs* of our fate when we go hence; but are ſuch as rather weaken than confirm the ſuppoſed credibility of it. For muſt a ſtate of *puniſhment*, which neceſſarily implies a ſtate of ſenſibility and reflection, exclude all *future* opportunity for converſion, recollection, and reſtoration, *becauſe* we are told that there will be no repentance in Hades, *where* it is imagined, but erroneouſly that there is *no* ſenſibility and reflection, *no* work nor device, *no* knowledge, *no* wiſdom, and conſequently no poſſibility of repentance? Even ſuppoſing, but not granting, from the above texts, that the ſtate, intermediate between death and the day of judgment, will be a ſtate of abſolute ſilence, inſenſibility, and inactivity, does it follow therefrom that there will be no room for thought, recollection, repentance, and amendment in that ſtate of *puniſhment* to be portioned out to the wicked in the reſurrection; at the *reſurrection*, I ſay, *when* they are to *receive the things done in their bodies?* But that thoſe texts above quoted do not even prove that the ſtate, intermediate between death and the day of judgment, will be a ſtate of ſilence, inſenſibility and inactivity, the following comment on thoſe paſſages will abundantly evince. From whence it will appear, that thoſe paſſages were penned with no view at all to determine any thing poſitive as to the *ſtate* of the dead, a circumſtance in thoſe *infant* days of the church not ſo fully revealed or ordinarily talked of, but as ſeaſonable *monitions* only, ſolely reſpecting the duty of the *living*.

In death, ſays the Pſalmiſt, *there is no remembrance. In the grave who ſhall give thee thanks?* Pſal. vi. 5. *The dead praiſe not the Lord, neither any that go down into ſilence.* Pſal. cxv. 17.

Agreeably to which, ſays Iſaiah, *The grave cannot praiſe thee. Death cannot celebrate thee.* Iſa. xxxviii. 18.

Again ſays the Pſalmiſt, *What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the duſt give thanks unto thee, or ſhall it declare thy Truth. Pſal.* xxx. 9.

In order to underſtand theſe paſſages aright we are to obſerve, that as God had frequently declared to mankind, that the moſt acceptable ſervice they could perform to him would be to call upon him in the *time of trouble*, and to glorify him when delivered by him from their diſtreſs, it was natural for thoſe piouſly diſpoſed men of old, when in danger of death, through ſickneſs or any other calamity, to urge the conſideration of God's glory (materially interſted, as by his own declarations they ſuppoſed it was, in the thanks and praiſes of the living) as an argument moſt likely to win upon the Divine clemency, and induce him to effectuate the wiſhed for recovery or deliverance. This therefore they did with boldneſs, inſinuating, by a kind of enthuſiaſtic fervour, and with all the energy of *eaſtern* ſtyle, that his own honour and glory ſeemed, as it were, dependant on it; and that as it was the ſupreme pride and pleaſure of their life, ſo would it be the invaried practice of it too, to offer up to him *that portion* of praiſe and thankſgiving *here*, which could not be beſtowed upon him in an *hereafter*. Agreeably to which we find the Pſalmiſt aſking as follows;

Doeſt thou ſhew wonders among the dead, or ſhall the dead riſe up and praiſe thee?

Shall thy loving kindneſs be ſhewn in the grave, or thy faithfulneſs in deſtruction?

Shall thy wondrous work be known in the dark, or thy righteouſneſs in the land where all things are forgotten. Pſalm. lxxxviii. 10. 11. 12.

Intimating with the ſame enthuſiaſtic warmth, that as the wonders which God did *here*, for the children of men, were ſuch as would ſcarce be excelled, or even equalled, in a ſtate to come; it was in a manner neceſſary for his honour and glory that the pious and well diſpoſed ſhould be *preſerved*, in order to render unto him their praiſes for his wondrous works *here*, *where* only they could be beſt remembered, and properly celebrated. In either inſtance, however, we are to underſtand the words as ſpoken by the Pſalmiſt not doctrinally, but poetically, and with reference only to this preſent world, and that little knowledge, at that Time ſubſiſting among men (owing to ſome accidental, perhaps *judicial*, errors in judgment,) concerning the world to come.

Hence it appears, that as the above paſſages were not meant to determine any thing poſitive concerning the nature of that ſtate which will be conſequent upon our exit from this, they can with no propriety be urged to prove either that we ſhall or ſhall not obtain therein a ſenſible and active exiſtence. Nor is there any thing more concluſive on that head to be deduced from that paſſage quoted from *Eccleſiaſtes*.

Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave whither thou goeſt.

That is, whatſoever ſhall be found to lie within the compaſs of thy abilities to effect, do it vigorouſly, *inſtantly*——for the buſineſs which is incumbent on thee to perform *here* cannot be tranſacted in the

the grave, or in Hades, whither thou goeſt. And therefore——*if the tree fall toward the South, or towards the North, in the place where the tree falleth there it ſhall be.*

That is, the merit or demerit of the man, as to his conduct in *this* life, is fixed and determined when he falls into the grave. *So far down* the account between him and his God is finally and *unalterably* ſettled. But does it therefore follow that he may not have ſome other buſineſs to perform in that ſtate of exiſtence, to which he is to ſucceed when he makes his departure *hence*?

That the ſoul will have a *vital* exiſtence immediately after its departure from the body, the ancients in general believed. What ſays Pythagoras?

Morte carent animæ, ſemperque priore relictâ
Sede, novis domibus vivunt, habitantque receptæ. OVID.

And that it will not only have a *vital*, but an intellectual and *rational* exiſtence there too, we may reaſonably conclude from the parable in the Goſpel, concerning the rich man and Lazarus, where a converſation is ſuppoſed to be carried on between the one and the other.*

And Sir Peter King, in his moſt excellent hiſtory of the apoſtle's creed, has proved very clearly, "that amongſt all the ancients, Jews or Chriſtians, the word *hades*, in its moſt uſual acceptation, implied a common lodge or receptacle of ſeparated ſouls, good and bad, wherein each of them, according to their deſerts in this life, and their expectations of the future judgment, remained either

* From this circumſtance in ſacred ſtory not only the ſenſibility of the ſoul in its intermediate ſtate, but ſomewhat more to my purpoſe may be inferred, *viz.* its ability and propenſity to go through a courſe of recollection and reflection repentant of its bad behaviour in a prior ſtate.

in joy or miſery. In the beginning of Homer's Iliad the poet invocates his muſe to aſſiſt him in the deſcription of the *anger* of Achilles, which was ſo fatal to the Greeks, that it ſent many noble ſouls to *Hell*, and made their carcaſſes a prey to dogs.

Πολλας δ' ιφθιμους ψυχας αιδι προιαψεν
Ηρωων· αυτους δ' ελωρια τευχε' Κυνεσσιν.

That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign,
The ſouls of mighty chiefs untimely ſlain. POPE.

And in the eleventh book of the Odyſſe, Ulyſſes gives an account of his deſcent into Hades, where, among others of his acquaintance, he beheld the ſoul of Achilles *ſkipping* with joy in a flowery meadow, whilſt the ſouls of other dead men ſtood by in a mournful poſture relating their particular ſufferings.†

——ψυχη δε ποδωκεος Αιακιδαο
Φοιτα μακρα βιβωσα κατ' ασφοδελον λειμωνα
Γηθοσυνη —— ——
Αι δ' αλλαι ψυχαι νεκυων καταθνειωτων
Εστασαν αχνυμεναι, ειροντο δε κηδε, εκαστη.

† Vid. Doctor Jortin on the ſubject.

So ſays Sir Peter—but the *ſkipping* with joy, if I may be allowed to offer a piece of criticiſm upon the paſſage, beſpeaks a levity of gait not ſuited to the ſterner air of Achilles, and falls ſhort of the idea the poet meant to convey by the μακρα βιβωσα, which is with more propriety expreſſed in the following lines;

While yet I ſpoke, the ſhade *with tranſport glow'd,*
Roſe in his majeſty and noblier trod,
With haughty ſtalk he ſought the diſtant glades,
Of warrior kings and join'd the illuſtrious ſhades.
Now, without number, ghoſt by ghoſt aroſe,
All wailing with unutterable woes. POPE, Odyſſ. B. v. l. 658.

Each

Each of them ſeeming ſuitably affected by the ſentence that had been paſſed upon them by *Minos*, who, in that infernal region judged all ſouls, according to their actions in the body, either to miſery or felicity.

Ενθ' ητοι Μινωα ιδον διος αγλαον υιον
Χρυσεον σκηπτρον εχοντα, θεμιςευοντα νεκυεσσιν.

High on a throne, tremendous to behold,
Stern Minos, waves a mace of burniſh'd gold,
Around ten thouſand thouſand ſtand,
Through the wide dome of Dis, a trembling band;
Still as they plead the fatal lots he rowls,
Abſolves the juſt, and dooms the guilty ſouls. ‡

POPE, Odyſſ. B. v. l. 892.

That the ſame ſentiments obtained likewiſe both amongſt the ancient Jews and primitive Chriſtians, the ſame learned writer, above quoted, has abundantly proved, to whoſe excellent comment I muſt, for diſpatch ſake, refer the curious reader; but let him firſt peruſe the following paſſage from Novatian, with a learned commentary upon it, by the late Mr. Jackſon, of which, for want of a better at hand, I have taken upon me to give the tranſlation which follows. *

‡ For a further illuſtration of the ſame point, ſee the ſixth book of Virgil.

* Namque quæ infra terram jacent, ſays Novatian, neque ipſa ſunt digeſtis & ordinatis poteſtatibus vacua. Locus enim eſt quo piorum animæ impiorumque ducuntur, futuri judicii præjudicia ſentientes: ut operum ipſius in omnibus partibus redundantes magnitudines non intra mundi hujus capciſſimos licet, ut diximus, ſinus, concluſus videremus, ſed etiam infra ipſius mundi et profunda et altitudines cogitare poſſemus; & ſic conſiderata operum magnitudine, tantæ molis digne mirari poſſemus artificem.

Upon which ſays Mr. Jackſon.

Even

"Even the ſubterraneous regions, ſays Novatian, have their regular and diſtinct principalities and powers. For thither the ſouls of the good and bad are brought, where they receive a foretaſte of that ſentence which will hereafter be paſſed upon them. And this in order to enable us to perceive that, extremely capacious as are the limits of this upper part of the earth, they are yet not able to contain all the vaſt operations of God (without end redundant) but that there is room for a contemplation of them even in the great *profound* below; where alſo, from the marvelouſneſs of the effects, we may be led to an attentive and juſt admiration of their original and ſupreme cauſe."

Prævalebat opinio apud veteres non ſolum Chriſtianos, ſed etiam Ethnicos & Judæos, eſſe aliquem infernum locum ſive ſub terra ſitum, ubi piorum & impiorum animæ poſt divortium corporis diducibantur judicium expectaturæ. Hic diverſas aſſignabant ſedes juſtorum & injuſtorum animis: et Chriſtum ad inferos deſcendiſſe conſtanter docuerunt antiqui ſcriptores Chriſtiani: licet ad *quos* & *quam ob cauſam deſcendiſſet* non peræque inter ipſos conveniret.

De anima Patrocli, princeps poetarum Homerus dicit:

Ψυχη δε κατα χθονος ηυτε καπνος
Ωχετο τετριγυια—Il. ψ. v. 102
Like a thin ſmoak he ſees the ſpirit fly,
And hears a feeble, lamentable cry.

Et Tartarum ſub terra eſſe deſcripſit Il. θ. v. 13.

Et Heſiod in Theog. v. 119.

Hic Titanas puniendos conjeciſſe Jovem finxerunt poetæ; & vinculis alligatos ſubterraneo loco narrat. Heſiod. Theog. v. 117, 118.

Nec abſimili modo teſtatur Apoſtolus quod Deus angelos peccatores σειρας ζοφου ταρταρωσας παρεδωκεν εις κρισιν τετηρημενους, II. Pet. ii. 4.

Vetus poeta Diphilus apud Clem. Alex. dicit, Και γαρ καθ αδην δυο τριβους νομιζομεν μιαν δικαιων, ετερ αν δε ασεφων ειναι οδον και εις τους δυο καλυψει η γη. Strom. 5.

Et inferna pœnarum domicilia & campi deliciarum Elyſii apud poetas omnibus innoteſcunt.

Phariſæorum ſecta, apud Judæos credebat αθανατον τε ισχην ταις ψυχαις ειναι και υπο χθονα δικαιωσεις τε και τιμας υπ αρετης η κακιας επιταδευσις εντω σιω γεγονε. Joſ. Jud. Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 2. Et teſtatur origines Judæos ab infantia dediciſſe, την της ψυχης αθανασιαν και τα υπο γην δικαιωληρια, και τας τιμας των καλως βεβιωκοτων. Cont. Celſ. lib. v. p. 260. Notum eſt etiam illos diverſa inferiorum loca appellare ſuperiorem & inferiorem Paradiſum. Αλλα μεν ουδε αποθνησκειν φημι παντας τας ψυχας εγω——αλλα τι' τας μεν των

To

To which there is added by way of note, what follows;

" It was a prevailing notion, not only among Chriſtians but alſo with the heathen world and Jewiſh nation too, that there is ſome *infernal* region or place ſituated under the earth, whither the ſouls of the good and bad after death are brought *waiting* the iſſue of a future judgment. Here it was that they aſſigned to ſouls reſpectively their diſtinct and ſeparate allodgments. And that Chriſt deſcended into ſome lower regions the ancients conſtantly affirmed, though to which of them, or upon what *account*, they were not altogether agreed in."—I am ſurprized that there ſhould be any difficulty in finding out a cauſe for our Saviour's deſcent into thoſe lower regions, termed by the apoſtle's creed *Hell*, when ſcripture aſſures us that he went to preach to the *ſaints* in *priſon*, meaning by that term the ſame intermediate ſtate of abode we have now under conſideration; whither he went to give them a proof, *ſo far down*, of his being the promiſed Meſſiah. But to return to Novation.

Homer deſcribes Tartarus as a place of puniſhment beneath the earth—telling us that Jupiter threatened the inferior Deities with the pains of Tartarus if they aſſiſted either the Greeks or Trojans.

ευσεβων εν χρειτονι ποι χωρω μεχειν τας δε αδικυς και πονηρας εν χειρονι τον το χρισεως εκδεχομενας χρονον τοτε. Juſt. iv. Dial. p. 148. Congruens Irenæus hæc habet: Dominus legem mortuorum ſervavit ut fieret primogenitus a mortuis & commoratus uſque in tertiam diem in inferioribus terræ, Lib. v. cap. 31. Vid. ibi plura. Hunc opinionem confirmavit ex Mat. xii. 40. Epheſ. iv. 9. Pſ. lxxxv. 13. Quæ loca non de ſepultura corporis ſed animæ ad inferos eſſe ſub terra dicit lib. iv. cap. 45. Sic etiam frequenter Tertul. vid. lib. de anima, c. vii. 55. & de idolat. p. 622, & hæc carmina ſunt illa deſcripta, viz.

——Sub corpore terræ.

In parte ignotâ quidam locus extat apertus luce ſuâ fretus, Abrahæ ſinus iſte vocatur. Altior a tenebris, longe ſemotus ab igne.

Sub terra tamen hæc, &c. Lib. iv. adv. Marc. vid. de hac re diſſertationem contra Græcos ſive Platonem Hippolyto adſcriptum in collectaneus Fabrit. p. 220.

Hieronymus habet—infernus locus in quo animæ recluduntur, ſive in refrigerio, ſive in pœnis pro qualitate meritorum. Tom. v. Com. in Oſc. cap. xiii. & ibid. com. in Jon. cap. ii. infernus in medio terræ eſſe perhibetur, &c.

What

What God but enters yon forbidden field,
Who yields aſſiſtance, or but wills to yield,
Back to the ſkies with ſhame he ſhall be driven,
Gaſh'd with diſhoneſt wounds the ſcorn of Heaven!
Or far! oh, far from ſteep Olympus thrown,
Low in the dark Tartarean gulf *ſhall groan,*
With burning chains fix'd to the brazen floors,
And lock'd by Hell's inexorable doors:
As deep beneath th' infernal centre hurl'd,
As from the centre to th' etherial world.

POPE. Il. B. ix. l. 11. &c.

A kind of ſimilar deſcription of this ſeparate ſtate is to be met with in Heſiod [Theog. v. 717. 718.] who tells us that *here* the poets ſuppoſe that Jupiter threw the Titans to be puniſhed, bound with chains in a ſubterraneous cavern.

Agreeably to which, ſays St. Peter——*God ſpared not the Angels that ſinned, but caſt them down to* hell, *and delivered them into chains of darkneſs to be reſerved unto judgment.* II. Pet. ii. 4.

The ancient poet *Diphilus*, according to Clemens Alexandrinus, ſays—in Hades there are two paths, the one the walk of the *good*, the other the road of the *bad*, both of them lying under the covert of the earth——and the poets' *infernal* regions of *diſtreſs*, and Elyſian fields of *delights* are well known to all——That ſect called the Phariſees believed that there is a never dying energy in ſouls, and that under the earth there were allotted to the followers of virtue and vice their reſpective rewards and puniſhments. And Origen declares that all the Jews were from their infancy taught to expect (υπο την γην) in a ſubterranean ſtate, a *continued life* to the ſoul, an erection of courts of juſtice, and a diſtribution of rewards to thoſe who ſhould behave

behave well in life. It is well known alſo, that in their mention of the lower *regions*, they divided them into what they call the *upper* and the *lower* Paradiſe.

But I do not ſay this, ſays Juſtin Martyr, that the ſouls of all men die——but what? Why that the ſouls of the good are placed in a better ſtate, but the unjuſt and wicked ones in a worſe, waiting the *approach* of the day of judgment. Agreeable to which ſays Irenæus, The Lord himſelf ſubmitted to the law of death, and became the firſt fruits of them that ſlept; remaining only three days, in the lower regions of the earth. Which opinion he confirmed from Matt. xii. 40. Epheſ. iv. 9. Pſalm lxxxv. 13. and ſuppoſes theſe paſſages to relate, not to the ſepulture of his body, but to the deſcent of his *ſoul* into Hades, or among thoſe infernal beings, whom he ſuppoſes to be lodged under the earth.

In this ſtrain frequently talks Tertullian, and particularly in the following verſes aſcribed to him which I have engliſhed thus;

Beneath earth's load and in a path unknown,
There opes a ſelf-illumed void.

Upon the ſame point ſee a diſſertation againſt the Greeks, or againſt Plato rather, aſcribed, as we find it in Fabritius's collection, to Hippolitus, P. 220. ——St. Jerome too ſpeaks of a place *below*, in which ſouls are *refreſhed* or *puniſhed*, as ſhall happen to be their deſerts. And the ſame writer, in his commentary on Jonah, ſays that *Hell* was ſuppoſed to be in the middle of the earth.

For other proofs to the ſame point, ſee Mr. Jackſon's note itſelf; and whoever would wiſh to meet with a valuable treaſure of critical learning and maſterly reaſoning, conveyed to the reader in

the moſt pure, and elegant Latin, let him carefully read his *Novatian* throughout.

From what has been ſaid it appears, I think, abundantly evident that *Hades* or the ſtate intermediate between death and the day of judgment, was never looked upon by the ancients as a ſtate of ſilence inſenſibility, and inactivity, but on the contrary as a place of poſitive rewards and puniſhments, which the good and bad are there to ſhare, agreeably to their reſpective deſerts, and which it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe they will find placed to their account at the *day of judgment*.——In anſwer however to this, it is urg'd by a writer as follows;

" When the dead," ſays he, " are raiſed, and appear at the " great tribunal the enquiry is what they have done in *this* " world, that every one may receive the things done in his body " II. Cor. v. 10.——No reckoning we ſee, ſays he, is at all made " of the *middle* ſtate, but it is paſſed over as if it *really* were, " what it is ſometimes compared to, a ſtate of ſleep; or as if " no ſuch period had intervened between the day of each man's " death and the day of judgment. " *

If by a ſtate of *ſleep* we are here to underſtand a ſtate of inſenſibility and inactivity, it is evident that *that* neither is the ſtate of a man's ſoul, even in the *bed* of ſleep, notwithſtanding all that Mr. Locke may be *thought* to have proved to the contrary, nor will it be its condition in *Hades*, if we attend to the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, unleſs we can ſuppoſe it meant to imply a caſe different from what is and will be the fate of all others in the intermediate ſtate; nor does it neceſſarily follow that the receiv-

* See Mr. Horbery's Script. Doct. P.

ing

ing the things *done in the body* reſpects wholly and ſolely, the things tranſacted in that body of fleſh the ſoul is fated to animate *here*——ſince the word σωμα (body) has been allowed to be of a very indeterminate meaning, and is appoſitely applied to *ſpiritual* or *etherial*, as well as to *corporeal* vehicles of the ſoul.

It being certain then that nothing deducible from the nature of the *ſeparate* ſtate can be urged in diſproof of its being *probational*, ſo as to evince however that the preſent life is the only period of our exiſtence, on which depends our final fate, let us proceed to conſider the circumſtances reſpecting that day of *judgment to come*, which will end, is it ſaid, the ſtate intermediate between *that* and the day of our death probational or not, in an abſolute *irreverſible* ſentence, paſſed upon all mankind in general, to happineſs or miſery *eternal*.

In ſupport of that opinion, the argument uſually thought moſt concluſive and unanſwerable is——that the term αιωνιον ſignificant, as is ſuppoſed, of a duration of time *without end*, is applied by St. Matthw to that ſentence which he ſays will be paſſed upon the wicked and the righteous reſpectively, at the day of judgment;

Theſe ſhall go away εις κολασιν αιωνιον into everlaſting puniſhment; but the righteous εις ζωην αιωνιον into life eternal.

This being an objection to the belief of a future *limitation* of torments in reſerve for the wicked, which even the moſt ingenious among the patrons of ſuch perſuaſion have hitherto been at a great loſs how to reply to ſufficiently or ſatisfactorily, it may be thought perhaps to argue no ſmall degree of vanity in me to engage in the arduous taſk, to aim at ſurmounting

a difficulty to which men of diſtinguiſhed abilities have as yet been found unequal. But as an *attempt* to vindicate the honour and attributes of Deity, ſo much intereſted as they appear to be, in the preſent enquiry, is, for the cauſe ſake, venial at leaſt if not altogether laudable,* it is to be hoped that thoſe, whom haply I may not be able to bring over to my own opinion will decline diſcharging upon me thoſe ſevere and cutting reflections, which are too uſually in great plenty beſtowed upon thoſe who dare to think for themſelves. To proceed then;

The epithet αἰωνιον by which St. Matthew, repreſents to us the duration of that ſtate of happineſs and miſery which will be portioned out to the righteous and wicked at the day of judgment reſpectively, ſeems, I think, to intimate, by its being uſed in ſeveral places of Scripture, where we are aſſured a *limited* duration was intended, inſtances of which ſee below,† that the *latter* will conſiſt, in like manner as will the *former*, at firſt of ſome *ſucceſſive* periods of exiſtence. *Then* cometh the end, or a period will *then* be put to the exiſtence of things, by the meaſurement of *time*, or a various

* Si modo periculum ſcandali, ſays the elegant, learned, and pious Dr. Holdſworth, et pietatis injuria & læſæ verbi Dei majeſtatis crimen amoveatur, pergamus intrepridi; labores noſtri quo magis aſſidui, eo magis accepti, longeque gratiſſimi.

Holdſ. Prælect. Theol. Lect. iv. p. 31.

† Such was the caſe, with reſpect to God's promiſe of κατεχεσιν αιωνιον to the ſeed of Abraham, which we interpret an *everlaſting* poſſeſſion.

Again, It was ſaid, that the ſtatutes of the law of Moſes ſhould be νομιμα αιωνια, ſhould be laws that would laſt *forever*; and yet we find that the Moſaic laws and ſtatutes have been a long time ſince *aboliſhed*.

Again, I have built ſays Solomon, a houſe of habitation for thee—viz. God—and a place for thy dwelling *forever*; which place however has not now one ſtone left upon another, nor a ſingle trace of the habitation of Deity to be found near it.

Again, I will eſtabliſh, ſays God, the kingdom of David *forever*, and yet this kingdom has not only paſſed away long ſince from the family of David, but has now in fact no exiſtence at all.——See alſo infra—p. 78.

ſucceſſion

ſucceſſion, των αιωνων, of ages; *then* in ſhort, and not till then, eternity, if I may ſo ſpeak, will commence, when *Chriſt ſhall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father*; *when he ſhall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power, for he muſt reign* till he hath put down *all enemies under his feet. The laſt enemy that ſhall be deſtroyed is Death*; prior to which, there will be according to St. John, (of which more hereafter) more than one reſurrection and more than one day of judgment and retribution. Nor does it appear to me, from any thing I can gather from our Saviour's Goſpel that, he makes the fixed *final ſtate* of either the *good* or the *bad*, the *immediate* ſubject of his miniſtry, but an *aſſurance* only that prior to *both*, prior to the *final* ſtate of either the good or bad, a ſhare in his *own* kingdom will be the happy portion of the one, and a deprivation of, or excluſion from it, in a place of temporary pains and torments, the melancholy and unhappy fate of the other.

It is obſervable, I ſay, to an attentive reader, that our Saviour's main deſign, while here on earth, was to fit and prepare men for an inheritance in *that* kingdom, (an *opening* only to the *final ſtate* of the *bleſſed*) which, in length of time, he was to *receive from the Father*, and which is ſometimes called by him, the kingdom of God and the Father, ſometimes the kingdom of Heaven, and at other times, the kingdom of God and of Chriſt. Of this ſame opinion was apparently the great *Mede*, who poſitively aſſerts, that the *kingdom of Heaven* and *of Chriſt*, ſo frequently mentioned in Scripture, is the ſame with the kingdom of a *thouſand* years. It will follow, ſays he, that "whatever Scripture ſpeaks of a kingdom of Chriſt to be at his ſecond appearance, or at the deſtruction of Antichriſt it muſt needs be the ſame which Daniel deſcribes [chap. vii.] and *ſaw* ſhould be at that time, and ſo conſequently be the kingdom of a thouſand years; which the Apocalypſe includes between

tween the beginning and conſummation of the great judgment—Ergo, ſays he, *that* in Luke xvii, from verſe 20 to the end;—*that* in Luke xix. from the 11 verſe to 15;—Luke xxi. verſe 31;—*When we ſee theſe things come to paſs know, &c.*—See, ſays he, what went before, viz. *The Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory*, borrowed from Daniel. And that in II. Tim. iv. 1. *I charge thee before God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.*

"By theſe, ſays he, we may underſtand the reſt, taking this for a ſure ground, that this expreſſion of the Son of Man's coming in the clouds of Heaven, ſo often inculcated in the *new* teſtament is taken from, and hath reference to, the prophecy of Daniel; it is no where elſe to be found in the *old* teſtament. As our Saviour alſo calls himſelf ſo frequently the Son of Man; becauſe Daniel ſo called him in that viſion of the great judgment; and that we might look for the accompliſhment of what is there propheſied of him." *

And we find that our Saviour, in his excellent ſermon on the mount, directs moſt of his arguments and exhortations, with a principal view *to that kingdom he was to receive from the Father*; and points out to his hearers the particular qualifications that would be deemed neceſſary to entitle men to a *poſſeſſion* therein.

Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit, ſays he, *for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Bleſſed are the meek*, for *they ſhall inherit the earth*—— That by the earth here mentioned is to be underſtood the kingdom of *Chriſt* ſpoken of above, the remark below evinces.† Again—

* See Mede's letter to Dr. Meddus *touching the great day of judgment.*

† Our Saviour, ſays Dr. Burnet, in his divine ſermon on the mount, makes this one of the beatitudes——*bleſſed are* the *meek* for *they ſhall inherit the earth.*

Bleſſed

Bleſſed are the *pure in heart for they ſhall*——do what? Why they ſhall *ſee God*,—Intimating that the kingdom of Heaven before alluded to, and *the viſion* of God were to be conſidered as two different and diſtinct ſtates of happineſs——that poverty of ſpirit, meekneſs, and ſuch like pacific virtues would be found requiſite to entitle men to a poſſeſſion of the *former*, but that abſolute *purity* alone could enable them to become partakers of the *latter*——that the *viſion of God* could be obtained or enjoyed by the pure in heart only, or by thoſe who, as St. John expreſſes it, ſhall be like him——ſhall be pure as he is *pure*. This *ſimilitude* it is to be preſumed, they will be, in ſome ſort, trained up to in the kingdom of Chriſt, which is meant to be *introductory*, to the viſion of God. It doth not appear yet, ſays the apoſtle, what we ſhall be, but we know that when *it doth appear*, or ſhall be made manifeſt, * which is the true tranſlation of ὅταν φανερωθῃ, we ſhall be *like him*. I. John. iii. 2.

Now that our ſimilitude with God, and of conſequence our final *full fruition* of happineſs, will not take place in that kingdom

But how, I pray, or where, ſays he, or when do the *meek* inherit the earth? Neither at preſent I am ſure, nor in any paſt ages. 'Tis the *great ones* of the world, ambitious princes, and tyrants, that ſlice the earth amongſt themſelves.——But a meek modeſt and humble ſpirit is the moſt unqualified perſon that can be for a court or a camp, to ſcramble for preferment or plunder, Now this beatitude, pronounced here by our Saviour. was ſpoken before by David—*But the meek ſhall poſſeſs the earth, and delight themſelves in the abundance of peace.* Pſalm xxxvii. 11. The ſame David was always ſo ſenſible of the uſage of the juſt in this life. Our Saviour therefore and his Apoſtles preached the doctrine of the croſs every where, and foretold the ſufferings that will attend the righteous in this world. Therefore neither David nor our Saviour could underſtand this *inheritance of the earth* otherwiſe than of ſome *future ſtate*, or of a ſtate yet to come—and this, ſays he, will appear to be the future kingdom of Chriſt. See Burnet's Theor. 2d. Vol. P. 230.—231.

* That this is the true meaning of the word φανερωθη ſee Mark iv. 22. where it is uſed entirely in the ſame ſenſe.

Ου γαρ εστι κρυπτον ο εαν μη φανερωθη.
Non eſt enim quicquam occultum quod non *manifeſtum* ſit.
For there is nothing hid which ſhall not be *manifeſted*——or revealed.

of

of Heaven and of Chriſt, ſo frequently made mention of, and alluded to in Scripture——Vid. Mede's Remark, note [*a*] p. 59.—— is plain, becauſe all that glory is to be done away, its continuance to be upon *earth* for a *limited* time only, and the kingdom itſelf afterwards, to be delivered up to God, even the Father. On the ſeveral poſſeſſors of which we are told the *ſecond death* ſhall have no power, Apoc. chap. xx. As at laſt, all rule, and all authority and power whatever, will be put down; *they* will be tranſlated (undergoing, at that inſtant, ſome extraordinary but ſuitable change of nature) into that Heaven of Heavens, wherein dwelleth God; *where only* it is poſſible we can ſee him as he is; and where only we muſt expect to meet with our full and *final* happineſs.

This therefore being once granted me to be the caſe, to the contrary of which there is not, that I can find, any one expreſs declaration from holy writ, it may eaſily be conceived why St. Mathew ſhould make uſe of the ſame epithet to denote the duration of ſtate, to be allotted to the wicked and the righteous, reſpectively at the day of judgment; without ſuppoſing it in either caſe determinative of *eternity*. And when St. John ſays, that the Devil, that deceived the nations, was caſt into the lake of fire and brimſtone, where the beaſt and the falſe prophet are, and ſhall be tormented day and night *forever and ever*—εις τυς αιωνας των αιωνων—it is plain, that thoſe expreſſions cannot be meant to imply an *eternal* ſtate, becauſe the ſame words are made uſe of by Daniel, to denote the duration of the ſaints abode upon earth, after the firſt reſurrection; which, he ſays, is to be εις τυς αιωνας των αιωνων. The ſaints, ſays he, of the moſt higheſt, ſhall take the kingdom and poſſeſs the kingdom εις τυς αιωνας των αιωνων, which our tranſlation terms for *ever and ever*; and yet that kingdom, we are well aſſured, muſt have an *end*, muſt be delivered up to God, even the Father.

But

But in order to render the matter under conſideration more unqueſtionably clear and certain, we will compare St. John's account of the *firſt* and *ſecond* reſurrection ſtates, as it lies in the Apocalypſe, with St. Matthew's deſcription of the day of judgment, and other paſſages alluſive to it, to be met with in the ſacred pages.

APOC. CHAP. XX.

1. And I ſaw an angel come down from Heaven, having the key of the bottomleſs pit, and a great chain in his hands.

2. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old ſerpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thouſand years.

3. And caſt him into the bottomleſs pit, and ſhut him up, and ſet a ſeal upon him, that he ſhould deceive the nations no more, till the thouſand years ſhould be fulfilled: and after that, he muſt be looſed a little ſeaſon.

4. And I ſaw thrones, and they ſat upon them, and judgment was given to them: and I ſaw the ſouls of them that were beheaded for the witneſs of Chriſt, and for the word of God, and which had not worſhipped the beaſt, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Chriſt a thouſand years.

5. (But the reſt of the dead lived not again until the thouſand years were finiſhed *) this is the *firſt* reſurrection.

6. (Bleſſed and holy is he that hath part in the *firſt* reſurrection: on ſuch the ſecond death hath no power, but they ſhall be prieſts of God, and of Chriſt, and ſhall reign with him a thouſand years.)

7. And when the thouſand years are expired, Satan ſhall be looſed out of priſon.

* We muſt admit of the *Parentheſes*, or the Evangeliſt's account is confuſed.

8. And there ſhall go out to deceive the nations, which are upon the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the ſand of the ſea.

9. And they went upon the breadth of the earth, and compaſſed the camp of the ſaints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of Heaven, and devoured them.

10. And the Devil, that deceived them, was caſt into the lake of fire and brimſtone, where the beaſt and the falſe prophet are, and ſhall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever. And I ſaw a great white throne, and him that ſat on it, from whoſe face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them.

12. And I ſaw the dead, both ſmall and great, ſtand before *God*; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of thoſe things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13. And the ſea gave up the dead which were in it; and Death and Hell which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works.

14. And Death and Hell were caſt into the lake of fire. This is the *ſecond* death.

15. And whoſoever was not found written in the book of life, was caſt into the lake of fire.

Chap. xxi. 1. And I ſaw a new heaven, and a new earth; for the firſt heaven and the firſt earth were paſſed away; and there was no ſea *.

By the angel coming down from Heaven, we are doubtleſs to underſtand the ſecond advent of our Saviour deſcending from thence

* I connect this 1ſt verſe of the 21ſt chapter with the laſt of the 20th, becauſe it appears to me, that they relate to each other; that the whole 20th chap. is but a *general* account of a ſeries of events, which the Evangeliſt proceeds to relate more minutely and circumſtantially in this laſt chapter; a ſimilar method is taken by Moſes in his 2d and 3d chapters of Geneſis; the former being a general, the latter a more particular account of the *creation* of Adam and his *fall*.

to

to take poſſeſſion of *that* kingdom of which he had received a promiſe from on high, and of which he was before ſent to invite mankind to become with him joint-partakers. And that the purity, peace, and proſperity of that kingdom might receive no interruption or alloy, for at leaſt a thouſand years to come; which, allowing, as with authority we may, to Daniel's *ſeventy* weeks, a year to each Day, will amount to more than 30,065 of our lunar years. The angel, we are told, will reſtrain the power of ſin and Satan for *that* time; will lay hold of the dragon, as St. John expreſſes it, that old ſerpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bind him a *thouſand* years, and caſt him into the bottomleſs pit, and ſhut him up, and ſet a ſeal upon him, ſo as that neither *he* nor *his* ſhall riſe to deceive the nations any more, *until* the *thouſand years* are fulfilled. During this period of time, the ſouls of the good and righteous, *the ſouls of them that were beheaded for the witneſs of Chriſt, and for the word of God*, and *which had not* worſhipped *the beaſt, neither had received* his *mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands* (in which claſs will be comprehended the good and righteous in general) all theſe are to live and reign with Chriſt. But *the reſt of the dead*, the wicked and ungodly, lived not till the thouſand years are fulfilled. *Bleſſed and holy is he that hath part in the firſt reſurrection.* But in length of time, or when the thouſand years, mentioned by St. John, are expired, ſin and Satan ſhall regain their powers; ſhall *deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, ſhall travel over the whole breadth of the earth, ſhall compaſs the camp of the ſaints, and the beloved city*; till at laſt, *fire ſhall come down from Heaven and devour them.*

Writers both of the Old and New Teſtament, having declared that another world will ariſe from the diſſolution of that which we now inhabit, by fire, the Evangeliſt gives us, in the 20th

chap. a ſhort and ſummary view of thoſe ſeveral important events which that *new* Heaven and *new* earth will produce *. The inhabitants will conſiſt, we ſee, of a twofold race ; prior the one to the other, by a long interval of time, termed by the apocaliptic Apoſtle, a thouſand years; the former conſtituting what the Evangeliſt calls the *firſt* reſurrection, the latter conſiſting of thoſe reviviſcent ſouls, whom he ſtiles, the *reſt of the dead*, who lived not again, he tells us, till the *thouſand years* were expired. Thoſe of the *firſt* reſurrection will be ſuch, only, as had diſtinguiſhed themſelves, while here on earth, by their exemplary piety, patience, and perſeverant purity of faith and manners, and the *ſouls of thoſe who were beheaded for the witneſs of Jeſus, and for the word of God*, &c. Thoſe of the *ſecond* reſurrection will be the *reſt of the dead*, whom we are to conſider, as ſtanding oppoſed to the *bleſſed* and *holy* ones, who are to have a part in the *firſt* reſurrection.

Bleſſed and holy is he that hath part in the firſt reſurrection: on ſuch the ſecond death hath no power, *but they ſhall be Prieſts of God and of Chriſt, and ſhall reign with him a thouſand years.* Neither bleſſed therefore nor holy, but on the contrary miſerable and wicked, during that period I mean, are the *reſt of the dead*; nor ſhall *they be prieſts of God, and of Chriſt*, neither ſhall *they* reign *with Chriſt a thouſand years.*

The *firſt*, in ſhort, are thoſe who ſhall, the *ſecond* ſuch as ſhall *not*, enter into that kingdom of Heaven, which in ſome places

* Of *old*, ſays the Pſalmiſt, *haſt thou laid the foundations of the earth*, and the Heavens are the work of thy hands; they ſhall periſh, but thou endureſt; yea, all of them ſhall wax old, like a garment, as a veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed; but thou art the ſame.

Behold, ſays Iſaiah, *I make a new Heaven, and a new Earth, and the former ſhall not be remembered nor come into mind.*

But we look for new Heavens, and a new Earth, ſays St. Peter.

is

is called the Holy City; in others, the new Jeruſalem; in others, the city of God; that kingdom of Heaven, which was the conſtant ſubject of our Saviour and his apoſtles' miniſtry *here*, and with a more *immediate* view to which, as *introductory* to the *final ſtate* of the bleſſed, they directed all their prophecies, parables, and other more open inſtructions and exhortations——that kingdom of Heaven, foretold by John the Baptiſt; referred to when he came *preaching in the wilderneſs of Judea, and ſaying, repent ye, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand*, Matt. ii. 2. For, as ſays the Evangeliſt, this is he that was ſpoken of by the prophet Eſaias, ſaying, the voice of one crying in the wilderneſs, *prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths ſtraight*; the chapter to which the Evangeliſt refers being predictive throughout of Chriſt's kingdom, which will take place at the converſion of Jews and Gentiles, and be completed by the reſurrection of the Saints, to reign with him a thouſand years. And that this will be in reality the caſe, I am fully convinced, by obſerving from St. Matthew's Goſpel, that St. John and our Saviour united in allotting it to the good and righteous; and that the latter ſpeaks of it afterwards in terms deſcriptive of that kingdom of Chriſt on earth, which the apocalyptic Apoſtle calls the *firſt reſurrection**.

* If with Dr. Hammond and ſome others, it be objected that by this kingdom, we are to underſtand ſolely the eſtabliſhment of the Goſpel of Chriſt in oppoſition to, and to the demolition of, both Heathen and Jewiſh rites and ſuperſtitions, I anſwer that we can with no degree of propriety conſider it in that light, but on the contrary, that by it is undoubtedly meant, *that* kingdom of the Meſſiah which will be triumphant at the *firſt reſurrection*. This is evident, not only from its being promiſed as a ſtate of reward to the good and righteous, but alſo from the drift and tenor of the parable of *the ſower*, which our Saviour himſelf explains in terms quite alluſive to his entrance into his kingdom of power and glory.

Now

Now when Jeſus, ſays St. Matthew, *heard that John was caſt into priſon, he departed into Galilee*, &c. and from that time he began to preach, and to ſay, as John before had ſaid, and with a view to the ſame event moſt certainly, or St. Matthew would not have failed pointing out the *difference*; he began to preach and to ſay, *Repent ye, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand*; and made it the conſtant ſubject of his pious miniſtry; *plainly* pointing out the *approach* of it to his *diſciples*, in that moſt excellent ſermon from the *mount*; at other times ſhadowing it out to them in *parables*; and at length, in expreſs terms, commanding them to petition firſt, in that moſt ſolemn form of words, which makes, with the utmoſt propriety, an oft-repeated part of our *public* liturgy—*When ye pray, ſay—Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth, as in Heaven*, &c. that kingdom of Heaven wherein *there is joy in preſence of Angels—which no man taketh away*—that kingdom of Heaven, wherein they, who ſhall be thought worthy to inherit it, *will be bleſſed*—wherein *the righteous ſhall ſhine forth as the ſun*; and into which *hypocrites ſhall not enter*; but on the contrary, that kingdom of Heaven, in ſhort, to be enjoyed by the righteous, but the wicked excluded from it. And this will be that ſame ſtate of glory and happineſs, which St. John deſcribes in the apocalypſe, I am convinced, becauſe ſeveral circumſtances relative to the one agree exactly with ſome particulars, mentioned by our Saviour and his apoſtles, reſpecting the other.

Bleſſed, ſays our Saviour, *are they which are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.*

Bleſſed

Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall revile you and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſely, for my ſake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven; for ſo perſecuted they the Prophets which were before you. That is, *they* were, as will ſome of you my diſciples be, *perſecuted unto the death; were ſlain with the ſword, were beheaded*, &c. Agreeably to all this, ſays the apocalyptic Apoſtle in his deſcription of the *firſt reſurrection ſtate, I ſaw the ſouls of them that were beheaded for the witneſs of God*, &c. and they lived and reigned with Chriſt a thouſand years—they had their reward. *Matt.*

Again, ſays Jeſus to his diſciples, *Verily I ſay unto you, that ye which have followed me in the* regeneration, when the Son of Man ſhall ſit upon the throne of his glory, *ye ſhall* ſit upon twelve thrones *judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael.*

That by ſitting in the throne of his glory we are to underſtand the triumphant ſplendour of Chriſt in the kingdom of Heaven, the preceding verſes evince, wherein our Saviour, after having repreſented the kingdom of Heaven as not eaſily attainable by thoſe who are *rich*, tells his diſciples, that an enjoyment of ſome diſtinguiſhed bleſſings and honours therein ſhall be the happy portion of themſelves and others, *who had forſaken all and followed him.*

And how exactly does this ſtate of glory, promiſed to his diſciples upon the above-mentioned occaſion, anſwer to that which is aſcribed by St. John to the partakers of the *firſt reſurrection? They ſhall be prieſts of God* and of Chriſt, and ſhall reign with him a *thouſand years.* And I John ſaw the holy city, new Jeruſalem,

ſalem, coming down from Heaven, &c. And I heard a great voice out of Heaven, ſaying, Behold the *tabernacle of God is with men*, and he will *dwell* with them; and they ſhall be his people, and God himſelf ſhall be with them and be their God. He that overcometh ſhall inherit all theſe things*.

It being then, I think, ſufficiently proved that the kingdom of Heaven, which the Goſpel teaches the good and righteous to expect in an hereafter, is that ſtate of glory and honour which the Evangeliſt aſcribes to the partakers of the *firſt* reſurrection in the apocalyptic viſion, it is evident that both muſt correſpond with each other, as in the nature and degree of felicity appro-

* If it be urged that the *firſt reſurrection*, here mentioned, is not to be underſtood in a *literal*, but in an allegorical or myſtical ſenſe, ſignifying only a reſurrection from ſin to a ſpiritual life (as we are ſaid to be *dead* in ſin, and to be *riſen* with Chriſt by faith and regeneration) and that this manner of ſpeech which St. Paul does ſometimes uſe, as in Epheſ. ii. 6, 14. and in Coloſſ. iii. 1. I aſked how that can be applied to the preſent caſe? Were the martyrs dead in ſin? 'Tis they that are raiſed from the dead; or after they were beheaded for the witneſs of Jeſus, naturally dead and laid in their graves, were *they* the *regenerate by faith?* Beſides why ſhould they be ſaid to be regenerate a thouſand years before the day of judgment? or to reign with Chriſt after this ſpiritual reſurrection for a limited time—a thouſand years? Why not to eternity? For in this *allegorical* ſenſe of riſing and reigning they will reign with him forever. Then after the thouſand years muſt all the wicked be regenerate and riſe into ſpiritual life? 'Tis ſaid here, the reſt of the dead lived not again until the thouſand years were finiſhed. That implies that at the end of theſe thouſand years the reſt of the dead did live again, and ſuppoſes, agreeably to the imagined allegory, that after a thouſand years all the wicked will be regenerate and raiſed into a ſpiritual life: a concluſion which the abettors of an *allegorical* ſenſe will not, I apprehend, be eaſily inclined to admit. *See Dr. Burnet's Theory.*

priated

priated to each reſpectively, ſo alſo in the very circumſtance of duration.

When therefore St. John ſays, that the partakers of the firſt reſurrection ſhall live and reign with Chriſt on earth for a thouſand years, but that *the reſt of the dead* lived not again till thoſe thouſand years are expired, and when, alluſively to the ſame tranſaction of things, we read in St. Matthew, that *when the Son of Man ſhall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, that then he ſhall ſit upon the throne of his glory, and before him ſhall be gathered all nations; that he ſhall ſeparate them one from another, as a ſhepherd divideth the ſheep from the goats; that he ſhall ſet the ſheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left; that then the King ſhall ſay to them on his right hand, Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world; and that theſe ſhall go into life everlaſting*; it is not reaſonable, I ſay, to ſuppoſe, concerning theſe two parallel accounts of one and the ſame ſeries of events, that the ζωην αιωνιον, termed by our tranſlation *life everlaſting*, in one place is meant to exceed that *limited* interval of time ſpecified and preſignified in the other; or conſequently the either of them allude to that full fruition of God, the *final* ſtate of the *bleſſed*, but only to that kingdom of God and of Chriſt which will be *introductory* to that Heaven of Heavens wherein we ſhall ſee God. So that as the epithet αιωνιον, applied to expreſs that duration of ſtate to be allotted to the *righteous* in the day of judgment, deſcribed by St. Matthew, is meant to imply a *limited* ſtate only, *that* being to be delivered up to God, even the Father; it will follow that the αιωνιον affixed to the declared fate of the *wicked*, in that ſame ſuppoſed tranſaction of things, may be reaſonably interpreted into a *limited* ſenſe too, and that it is in neither place meant to imply *eternity*; and that too for the following additional reaſon, viz. that if

we muſt neceſſarily fix the idea of eternity, to the repeated epithet αιωνιον in this paſſage, there is equal reaſon to interpret αιων, and all its derivatives, wherever elſe thoſe terms occur, in the ſame unbounded ſenſe too. And then when the Apoſtle ſays, concerning Chriſt, *by* whom he, viz. God, made the *worlds*, as it ſtands in our tranſlation, it ought to be rendered by whom he made *eternities* δι' ϐ και τϐς αιωνας εποιησεν. But αιωνας, in this and in all other places, means, *ages* or *certain periods of time*, in which ſuch and ſuch things were to be done——of which ſort was the patriarchal——that of the antediluvians——that of the law——that of the *Meſſiah*——that of the four great empires, of which the prophet Daniel ſpeaks—— theſe are properly ſpeaking ages.* And though I do not deny, but on the contrary, very readily ſuppoſe, and would by all means have the reader bear continually in his mind, that the ζωην αιωνιον will be *introductory* to a life of happineſs *without end*; yet it is very certain that the ζωην αιωνιον, in other words the kingdom of Heaven, mentioned elſewhere, to which the κολασιν αιωνιον is oppoſed, will have *an end*; ſince the time will come, when, as I obſerved before, Chriſt ſhall *deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father.*

It is moreover obſervable, from St. John's account of things, in the chapter above conſidered, that the judgment of the righteous and wicked will be ſo far from being cotemporary, that there will be a very conſiderable diſtance of time, the one from the other.

For a *thouſand years* will elapſe before *Satan* ſhall be looſed out of priſon; at which time, and not before, it ſeems evident, that the *reſt of the dead*, viz. the *wicked*, ſhall ariſe and repoſſeſs the earth; where being put upon a freſh trial of their conduct, they will walk ſtill after the advice and counſel of their old deceiver

* See Sykes on the epiſtle to the Hebrews.

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the Devil; *will go upon the breadth of the earth, and compaſs the camp of the Saints about, and the beloved city, and fire ſhall come down from Heaven and deſtroy them*; the Saints and *firſt* poſſeſſors of the new Heaven and the new earth, they of the *firſt* reſurrection retiring from it—up into that Heaven of Heavens where they will *ſee God.** And then, but not *till then*, the day of judgment for the *wicked* will take place; for immediately after the above account of things, St. John tells us as follows; and *I ſaw the dead both ſmall and great* (by which dead he undoubtedly means that *dead* which *lived* not again until the thouſand years were finiſhed) *ſtand before God, and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of thoſe things which were written in the books according to their works.* From whence it is evident that the judgment of of the righteous and wicked, deſcribed by St. Matthew, will be by no means cotemporary; but on the contrary, that a reſurrection of the wicked to *another trial* of behaviour upon earth, will take place before *their* day of judgment begins, and their ſentence εις κολασιν αιωνιον enſue. This, I think, I ſhall be able to make appear more unqueſtionably true, by enquiring further into the particulars, mentioned by St. Matthew, reſpecting our Saviour's *ſecond coming* to judge the world; obſervable as well in his 24th chapter, above mentioned, as in other parts of his Goſpel.

* Agreeable to which, ſays St. John, chap. xxii. 11. he that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous ſtill; and he that is holy, let him be holy ſtill: intimating, that he that is unjuſt, &c. will be unjuſt, &c. (adhuc ετι *hitherto*, not *forever*) and therefore that ſuch ſhall hereafter have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone; which is the *ſecond death*, chap. xxi. 5, 8. Into which, St. John tells us, *death* and *hell* were caſt, chap. xx. 14. *When* and *where* they will merit *another* and more *happy* reſurrection is not, that I can find, any where intimated to us in Scripture.

When the Son of Man, ſays he, *ſhall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then ſhall he ſit upon the throne of his glory, and before him ſhall be gathered all nations; and he ſhall ſeparate them one from another, as a ſhepherd divideth the ſheep from the goats; and he ſhall ſet the ſheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left; then ſhall the king ſay to them on his right hand, come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world.*

Now by the *ſheep on the right hand*, we muſt undoubtedly underſtand the righteous, who are to go εις ζωην αιωνιον; or St. John's *bleſſed* and *holy* who are to have a part in the *firſt* reſurrection, and are to reign with Chriſt a thouſand years. By the *goats on the left*, are moſt aſſuredly meant thoſe who are to go εις κολασιν αιωνιον, or St. John's *reſt of the dead*, who are to be *caſt into the lake of fire*.

But that theſe cannot exiſt at each ſide of the judge at one and the ſame time, is evident from this, that the former are to be admitted in conſequence of the ſentence paſſed upon them εις ζωην αιωνιον, or as St. John ſays, ſhall reign with Chriſt a thouſand years, *before* the reſt of the *dead*, the *wicked* (the goats on the left) ſhall live again, and of conſequence *before* they can become capable of being judged at all.

Come ye bleſſed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world.

Now what other kingdom is it poſſible our Saviour can here mean, than that kingdom in which, St. John tells us, the Saints are to reign with Chriſt for a thouſand years. This ſtate of glory muſt take place e're the good and righteous ſhall enter upon their *full final* happineſs, or there is apparently no force in words; and

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St. John's revelation may be this thing, or it may be that thing, or it may be *nothing*, or which is worſe than *nothing*, it may be a repoſitory of *myſtic* or *allegorical* intimations, which every man is at liberty to explain into what ſenſe and meaning he ſhall think fit.

Previous however to a poſſeſſion of their complete ſtate of happineſs there will be a judgment paſſed even upon the Saints themſelves, and all thoſe that ſhall have a ſhare in the *firſt reſurrection*. Agreeably to which, ſays St. Paul, we muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, that *every one* may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. By the pronoun *we*, the Apoſtle meant to include himſelf, that eminent church at Corinth, to which he was then writing, and all the elect people of God; intimating that the end and deſign of Chriſt's judging the world would be, in the firſt place, to diſtribute rewards to *him* and *all the other Saints*, in proportion to their reſpective deſerts. For it is neither neceſſary, nor even warrantable, to ſuppoſe that all will ariſe entitled to the ſame degree of happineſs indiſcriminately in the kingdom of Heaven. The parable of the ten talents, gives plain intimation to the contrary. And when we conſider that our Saviour himſelf declared, that there is none that doeth good, no not one; that at the beſt we are unworthy ſervants, it may eaſily be conceived that there will be, even in Chriſt's kingdom, different *alotments* of rewards, in proportion to the different degrees of merit, which upon examination, each individual ſhall be found to ſtand poſſeſſed of; as will probably be the caſe in the *laſt happy period* of the juſt; our Saviour declaring to us, that in his Father's houſe are *many* manſions; and not only this, but that ſome weakneſſes and imperfections which are more or leſs the portion of all men, even the beſt, muſt, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *be burnt up*.

It being certain then, that thoſe of the *firſt reſurrection* are to be judged by themſelves, and no leſs evident that they are to have a ſhare with Chriſt in judging the *reſt* of the dead, the *wicked*. (Vid. Apoc. chap. xx. 4.) It is very reaſonable, and even neceſſary to conclude, that the judgment to be paſſed on the *righteous* will be at an end, before that concerning the *wicked* begins.

To this, however, there will perhaps be urged, by way of objection, the following paſſage from St. Paul to Timothy.

I charge thee therefore, before God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the *quick and the dead, at his appearing in his kingdom*, &c. from whence ſome think it reaſonable to conclude that the righteous and the wicked will be judged at one and the ſame time. In anſwer to which, I will refer them to the very ingenious Dr. Rudd's Treatiſe on the Millennium, who, in general tells us, "that Chriſt will, in part, judge the *quick* wicked, i. e. thoſe wicked ones who ſhall be *alive* at his coming, by taking vengeance upon them in a flaming fire, burning up their bodies, and turning their ſouls into Hell;* the *dead* wicked, i. e. the wicked departed *before his coming*, by diſpoſing of their ſouls with them in the ſame region, diſtinguiſhed by the name of the abyſs, the bottomleſs pit, &c. and there confining them, with the Devil and his angels, to the time of their entrance upon a trial of behaviour in the new earth, at the cloſe of the thouſand years, i. e. at the cloſe of the ζωην αιωνιον enjoyed by the *good* and *righteous*, with our Saviour in his *kingdom*, and the κολασιν αιωνιον, undergone for that period by the *wicked in Hell*. Then likewiſe, i. e. at his appearing, will the Redeemer, in part, judge the *quick* Saints, thoſe who are partakers of the firſt re-

* This is ſuppoſed to happen at the diſſolution of this *preſent* world, and at the entrance of Chriſt into a poſſeſſion of his kingdom in the new earth. See Dr. Rudd, on the Millennium.

ſurrection

ſurrection *ſtate*, by cauſing ſuch as are alive to paſs under a glorious change; the *dead* Saints, by raiſing their bodies and re-uniting them to their ſouls, by taking them up to meet him in the air, by bringing them forward to reign with him in the new Heaven and new earth, and by inſtating them in the full liberty of God's children:"* which glorious liberty will be *introductory* to their final glory and happineſs.

Again, It will perhaps be urged that St. Paul's account of the ſecond coming of Chriſt, in his epiſtle to the Theſſalonians, and of the immediate conſequent effects of it, plainly prove that the righteous will ariſe at once to their full *final* happineſs; and that upon that ſuppoſition, my whole hypotheſis falls to the ground.

The Lord himſelf, ſays he, *ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a ſhout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt.*

Then we which are alive and remain ſhall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord.

To this I anſwer, that the apoſtle's meaning in this paſſage, is in general this, that thoſe which are alive upon earth, at the coming of Chriſt, thoſe righteous ones I mean, ſhall be carried by the angels into the clouds, there to meet the Lord, and appear before him, and being judged worthy to inherit his kingdom, they ſhall never *depart* from him, but ſhall enjoy his preſence for ever; that in the mean time, and as *introductory* to their *final joy* and *glory*, they muſt firſt deſcend with Chriſt, and reign with him in the new Hea-

* Dr. Rudd.

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ven and new earth, for a *period of time*, termed by St. Matthew ζωην αιωνιον.

And as a ſtrong proof, that the epithet αιωνιον is no Scripture term by which to expreſs the idea of an *eternal* ſtate, it is obſervable, that when the apoſtle intimates that the conſequence of the firſt reſurrection and reign with Chriſt upon earth εις ζωην αιωνιον for an age, would be a continuance with Chriſt *forever*, and ſo ſhall we *ever be* with the Lord; it is obſervable that the Apoſtle does not ſay——and ſo we ſhall be εις τον αιωνα but παντοτε with the Lord; there is likewiſe obſervable from the above texts, a very ſtrong argument to be drawn in favour of my hypotheſis, concerning a *twofold* and *ſucceſſive* reſurrection, it being therein poſitively declared that the *dead in Chriſt* ſhall riſe firſt, which ſtrengthens very ſufficiently, all I have ſaid concerning St. John's *reſt of the dead*, which are, undoubtedly, ſuch as are *not* dead in Chriſt, and who will not be *Chriſt's at his coming*.

Again, It will be objected in oppoſition to the doctrine of a twofold reſurrection, and a trial of the righteous and the wicked, at two diſtinct periods of time, that our Saviour himſelf ſeems to repreſent it as one ſingle cotemporary event.

The hour is coming, ſays he, *in which all that are in the grave ſhall hear his voice, and ſhall come forth; they that have done good unto the reſurrection of life; they that have done evil to the reſurrection of damnation.*

In anſwer to which, it is in many places obſervable, that the word ωρα, hour, is of a very large and extenſive ſignification in Scripture: and though it properly ſignifies that artificial part of time, which is called an hour, yet it is ſometimes metonymically uſed for

for a time of danger. Again, by a Synecdoche it is ſometimes contracted to a moment, ſometimes lengthened to a day, and ſometimes ſtretched out to months, years, and ages; in either caſe it is uſually rendered by the word Time.* Inſtead therefore of the *hour* is coming, we may with great propriety read, the time is coming, or that interval of time is coming on, in *the compaſs of which*, all that are in the grave ſhall hear his voice and come forth. In the *beginning* of which ſuppoſed interval of time, a thouſand years, they that have done good ſhall come forth into the reſurrection of *life*, in alluſion to which, ſays St. John, on *theſe* the *ſecond death* ſhall have no power; and at the *end* of that interval, they that have done evil ſhall go into the reſurrection of damnation, meaning by *that* the reſurrection of the *reſt of the dead*, the wicked, who will then be caſt, as was obſerved before, into the lake of fire and brimſtone.

Having then vanquiſhed, as I preſume, that formidable argument urged in ſupport of the doctrine of an eternity of torments, ariſing from a too general miſapprehenſion of the term αιωνιον, as applied by St. Matthew, chap. xxv. I ſhall beg leave to anſwer, in as brief a manner as I can, a few of thoſe popular arguments, which, without any kind of foundation in reaſon, any warrant at all from Scripture, or the regard due to the dignity and honour of God, and his attributes, are brought in ſuppoſed proof of the horrid doctrine.

Firſt then, It is aſſerted that the doctrine of an eternity of Hell torments to the wicked, is entirely conſiſtent with the juſtice of God, from the following arguments.

* For the various ſignifications of the word ωρα, conſult Leigh's Critic. Sacr. where will be found ſufficient authority for this interpretation of the word, in the paſſage before us. See alſo Dr. Rudd.

Firſt, Becauſe both rewards and puniſhments are alike propoſed to our choice.

Secondly, Becauſe the rewards are *eternal* as well as the puniſhments.

Thirdly, It was neceſſary that the ſanction of the divine laws ſhould be by eternal rewards and puniſhments.

Fourthly, Becauſe it is neceſſary that eternal puniſhments ſhould be inflicted upon the wicked, according to this ſanction.*

Firſt then, It is ſaid that the doctrine of eternal torments, is entirely reconcileable with our ideas of the infinite juſtice of God, becauſe rewards and puniſhments are alike propoſed to our choice; in other words, we may, if we will, ſecure to ourſelves the former, and it is from an abuſe of our freedom of action, if we chance to involve ourſelves in the latter.

To this I anſwer, if a man's freedom of will, is a ſufficient vindication of the Divine Juſtice, in inflicting upon ſinners an eternity of torments, and in conſequence of their perverſe and froward choice (and if it is not, the above argument is of no weight or conſequence at all) it may be aſked, how we can acquit the Divine Being of injuſtice in rendering man a *forced* candidate for that hazardous alternative, *infinite* happineſs, or *eternal* miſery——at the uncertain iſſue of one trial of probation for either? a difficulty this which will be thought perhaps to be ſufficiently obviated by obſerving,

Secondly, That the rewards are eternal as well as the puniſhments, in conſequence of man's behaviour in that ſtate of proba-

* Vid. Jenkins's Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſt. Rel. vol. ii. p. 267.

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tion he is, if you will, *preſſed into*; and that therefore, as the rewards, on the one hand, hold a due proportion to the puniſhments on the other, the caſe with man cannot be ſaid to be hard, if, after all, his ſhort life of ſin is puniſhed with an eternal ſtate of torments, when as ſhort a life of virtue, had it been his choice to it, would have been rewarded with an eternal ſtate of happineſs.*

An argument, if it may be called one, the concluſiveneſs of which Dr. Jenkins aims to ſupport, by obſerving "that the very beſt of us were *born in ſin*, and that as we had often forfeited our ſalvation to the Divine Juſtice, God, by virtue of his power and authority over us, might have propoſed *any* terms of reconciliation; but he has been pleaſed to appoint that our everlaſting happineſs or miſery, ſhould depend upon the moral terms of virtue and vice, and to ſet everlaſting happineſs againſt everlaſting miſery; and no man ſhall be ſentenced to Hell torments, but he might have been as happy as he ſhall find himſelf miſerable."

I would here gladly know what Dr. Jenkins would have us to underſtand by "the beſt of *us being born in ſin*, and our having forfeited, on that account, our ſalvation to the Divine Juſtice?"

If he means that we were born in ſin, through the *imputative guilt*, of our firſt parents, and *ſo* forfeited our ſalvation to the divine juſtice, it is plain he ſuppoſes that we *ourſelves*, forfeited our ſalvation *innocently*, but that notwithſtanding *that* forfeited it is, and we all of us deſerved to to be damned the very moment we came into being; if he means that we were *born in ſin*, by inheriting from *Adam* our ſinful luſts and paſſions, *that* too is our misfortune, and not our *fault*, and ſurely it muſt be hard indeed to be damned

* See Dr. Jenkins. Vol. i. 618.

to all eternity for the fault of *another*. Nor can I indeed ſee, in whatever light conſidered, the being *born in ſin*, or in other words the being *forced* into a ſhort life of ſin, can authoriſe the penalty of *eternal* torments on the ſinner. And indeed all that Dr. Jenkins has advanced in ſupport of this his *ſecond* argument in favour of the doctrine of eternal puniſhments (ſtrange that men ſhould be at ſo much pains to abuſe their God!) is too inconcluſive to merit a ſerious reply; we will therefore proceed to enquire whether or no he is more ſucceſful in his *third*; which is this—

Thirdly, it was neceſſary, ſays he, that the ſanction of the divine laws ſhould be by eternal rewards and puniſhments; for ſays he, "the ſanction of all laws is by rewards and puniſhments, and the deſign of appointing puniſhments is to *affright* men from ſin, as the end of rewards is to invite them to obedience. The only true meaſure and juſt proportion between the crime and the puniſhment is the ſuitableneſs of the puniſhment to enforce obedience to the law and cauſe it to be duly obſerved. For if the law is neceſſary and cannot be ſo effectually *obeyed* without a ſevere puniſhment to enforce it, the ſeverity of the puniſhment is ſo far from cruelty that it is a wiſe and juſt proviſion to *ſecure* obedience to the law and procure all the good deſigned by it."

If we are to ſuppoſe that God is neceſſitated to have recourſe, like *ſublunary* potentates, to *policy*, and *ſtratagem*, for the ſupport of his moral government of the world, the argument might perhaps be of ſome weight; but as the ſuppoſition on which it is founded is merely chimerical, not to ſay the worſt of it, the argument falls of courſe to the ground.

But ſuppoſing it equally juſt and prudent that Deity ſhould deviſe means moſt likely to effectuate a proper ſanction to his law yet it muſt neceſſarily be preſumed——

First

First, that every expedient for that end would be found to coincide with his juſtice, and,

Secondly, that it ſhould manifeſtly appear to be well calculated, beyond any *other method* whatever, to accompliſh or promote the advantage propoſed from it; neither of which ſeems to be the caſe in the doctrine of eternal torments:

For firſt, the doctrine of eternal torments can by no means be found to coincide with the infinite *juſtice* of God, even if we allow them moſt likely to effectuate a more general obedience to his laws. For ſuppoſing that even nineteen out of twenty, from the dread of the extremity of ſuch a puniſhment, would be witheld from a flagrant commiſſion of evil, how will that conſideration ſerve to mitigate the ſeverity of God's dealings towards the remaining *everlaſtingly tormented miſerables*? nay will it not ſeem, on the contrary, to come with a more pointed and unfeeling fury?

The unhappy wretch is puniſhed with the moſt exquiſite and never-ending torments for temporary crimes——and why? not that the crimes themſelves do in reality deſerve ſo ſevere and and ſhocking a vengeance, but for the *ſake of others*, his fellow creatures, it is thought *convenient* by the *all wiſe*, and *merciful* Creator, that it ſhould be inflicted on him.———*Credat Judæus apella*.

Such being the ſtate of the caſe, with reſpect to the ſuppoſed juſtice and equity of Deity, in inflicting eternal torments on the wicked, *ſuppoſing* them moſt likely to effectuate a more general obedience to his laws; let us in the next place ſee whether the doctrine itſelf is in *reality* calculated, beyond any other method whatever,

ever, for accompliſhing the end propoſed from it; and this will bring me to conſider Dr. Jenkins's *fourth* poſition on the point; which is this, viz.

Fourthly, It is neceſſary, ſays he, "that eternal puniſhments ſhould be inflicted on the wicked according to the ſanction of the divine laws, by eternal rewards and puniſhments: We find, ſays he, by ſad experience, how little effect the puniſhments now threatened have upon too many men, and if they were leſs dreadful they would be ſo much the leſs regarded."

In anſwer to this ſurmiſe, I muſt beg leave to aſk, whether a denunciation of temporal puniſhments, for temporal crimes, might not be ſuppoſed to anſwer the end of God's moral government of the word, and his ſcheme to reſtrain vice, full as well as the doctrine of endleſs torments? a queſtion this which may reaſonably enough be anſwered in the *affirmative*, from the following conſideration, viz. that no doctrine operates ſo powerfully, and with ſo great advantage, upon men's minds in general, as that of which they can at once perceive the *reaſonableneſs*, and its conſiſtency with the laws of equity and ſtrict juſtice. Apply then this maxim to the matter in hand, and upon the queſtion, whether an *eternity* of torments will enſue from *temporal* crimes, or a *temporal* puniſhment only, let us conſider which is moſt likely to be believed by the *diſcerning*, and of conſequence which of the two will moſt probably be attended to? A doctrine of endleſs torments raiſes at once in the mind, an idea of an hard ſaying, to which none but thoſe who are actuated by a blind implicit faith in the *expounders* of Revelation can poſſibly be prevailed upon to give the leaſt degree of credit. But that temporal crimes will, with the utmoſt ſeverity, be puniſhed, and with torments which will be of no *inconſiderable* duration, what man of any kind of reaſon and underſtanding will pretend to diſpute?

Preſs

Preſs therefore this conſideration with due force upon the mind of the wayward reprobate, and he will, if he takes upon himſelf to reflect at all, think with ſerioufneſs, on the ſolemn and alarming truth; whereas the *incredibility* of the doctrine of *eternal* torments will be moſt apt to drive him into ſuch a kind of ſceptical uncertainty concerning his future fate, as may terminate in a total indifference about it. I am, therefore, far from believing that the doctrine itſelf is "calculated, beyond any other method, for ſecuring a due obedience to the laws of God;" I rather imagine that the direct contrary will be the more general conſequence ariſing from it *.

The reader is, by this time, I imagine, ſufficiently convinced, that there is not, either in reaſon or revelation, any foundation for an expectance of an eternity of future torments; an hypotheſis which I have oppoſed with the greater earneſtneſs, in order to open a doctrine, which a removal of it effectually does, to a more rational and conſiſtent view of Divine Providence, with reſpect to his creation and government of the intellectual world; and for reconciling with the Divine Attributes, that, otherwiſe irreconcileable doctrine, *Predeſtination*; that ſpecies of it, I mean, which ſeems deducible from the divine *preſcience*. The ſum and ſubſtance of the whole is what follows.

* Ecce ignem ingentem & formidabilem quem ſtruunt [Theologi] ſed neque originem nobis indicant tanti ignis neque Fomitem, quo alatur neque locum idoneum quo ſubſiſtet et expiret. Hæc inquiunt non curat populus; recte, ſed apud ſapientes ignis phantaſticus, cujus nulla reddi poteſt ratio, & ſtultitiæ proximum eſt ut lucrifacias infinantes ſapientes perdere. Evehere potiàs debemus naturam humanam quantum licet; populumque ad *veritatem* & *ſanam mentem* proprius adducere.

Burnet. de ſtat. mort. p. 142.

That *predeſtination* has for its *real* object, the *Goſpel Diſpenſation, ſolely*, and is *perſonal* only with reſpect to *believers* and *unbelievers*; that the *preſcience* of God, over-rules not the will and actions of moral agents, nor predetermines in any degree their future fate: but as it will be aſked, how we can with propriety aſſert that God did not *will* and *determine* the *ſinner*'s deſtruction, when he *forced* him into exiſtence under an abſolute *foreknowledge* of what would be his fate, I have ſhewn that, *that* is a difficulty in ſpeculation removable only by a *rejection* of that hypotheſis, a *ſuppoſed eternity* of future torments. This is the method, and theſe the arguments, by which I have endeavoured to ſet the Scripture doctrine of Predeſtination, or Election, Reprobation and Future Puniſhments, in a clear and conſiſtent light; how I have ſucceeded in the attempt, let the diſcerning and impartial determine. In the mean time it will be neceſſary for me to give an anſwer to two objections, which will naturally ariſe from a denial of an *eternity of future puniſhments.*

Firſt, It will be ſaid that a diſbelief of that doctrine renders ſuppoſeable, a general *reſtitution*, and a reſtauration, at laſt, of all the *infernal* powers, the grand *ſeducer* himſelf not excepted.

In anſwer to this objection, I muſt beg leave to obſerve, that in an enquiry after *truth*, I do not think myſelf anſwerable for *conſequences*, which may chance to ariſe from it; nor do I look upon myſelf as called by the voice of reaſon or religion to *ſuppreſs* what may be thought a juſt vindication of the *former* in deference to other men's ill-judging fears concerning the latter; eſpecially in a caſe where, as in this, the attributes of God, the honour of religion, and the grand purpoſe of creation, are eſſentially intereſted. I make no ſcruple therefore to deliver it as my firm belief,

that

that that *firſt* enemy to every thing good and ſacred, will at *laſt* be reduced to a due obedience to the laws of rectitude, and the ſovereignty of him who made him; will in the end be convinced of the folly and heinouſneſs of his rebellious acts, and be induced to ſurrender up, at the throne of mercy (in oppoſition to which he has created an uſurping, lawleſs, Heaven-defying power) himſelf and his deluded adherents *, and, by virtue of the all-benevolent interceſſion of the great *captain of our ſalvation*, will at length obtain a general *oblivion* of prior delinquency; an hypotheſis which, ſo far from being ſingular, has for its ſupport the opinion of many eminent writers, ancient and modern. I ſhall only ſingle out at preſent the very learned and pious Origen †. And indeed I do not ſee how it is poſſible that God can be *all in all*, till he obtains the mighty conqueſt; till he ſhall be found to bring under a proper ſubjection that formidable rival of his power and authority.

Secondly, It will be urged in objection to my hypotheſis, or rather in reproof of a *promulgation* of it, that the *ſinner* will be pleaſing himſelf with ſome fancied, perſonal advantage from it; will be encouraged from thence to conſider vice as of a far leſs dangerous and deſtructive tendency than it appeared to him before; that his fears now for the conſequence of iniquity will be but ſmall in compariſon of thoſe which uſually gave a check to him in his career of vice; for

* Vid. Huetii Origeniarorum, lib. ii. queſt. 11.

† Συντελεια εστιν ενεσως αιων, και εν εκεινοις τοις μελλουσιν ενδειξεται ο Θεος τον πλουτον της χαριτος αυτου εν χρηστοτητι του αμαρτωλοτατου (i. e. Diaboli) και εις το αγιον πνευμα δυσφημησαντος κρατυμειν παρα της αμαρτια εν ολω τω ενεσωτι αιωνι και αρχηθεν μεχρι τελους τω μελλοντι μετα ταυτα ουκ οιδ' οπως οικονομησαμενου, i. e. per œconomiam quandam peccatorum veniam conſequetur. Orig. de Orat. ſect. 61. p. 169.

Jerome charges him with ſaying diabolum & dæmones acturos pœnitentiam aliquando, & cum ſanctis ultimo tempore regnaturos, Epiſt. ad Pammach. But Origen was not dogmatical in the point, for he ſays—Verum hæc purgatio ipſa quæ per pœnam ignis adhibetur quantis temporibus quantiſq; de ſeculis peccatoribus exigat cruciatus ſolus ſcire poteſt ille cui pater omne judicium tradidit. Lib. 8. in Epiſt. ad Rom.

that now let him die and be *punished*, it will only be for a time—for a thouſand *years* or ſo: (why truly a thouſand years is but a *trifling* ſpace of time to run through in a ſtate of *exquiſite pain and anguiſh*). In ſhort, it will be objected to me that I am ſtripping vice of its uſual horrors, and rendering that a ſtill more ready and welcome gueſt to thoſe, to whom, even under its moſt horrid and ſhocking appearance, it finds a too eaſy admittance. "If the terrors of ever-"laſting torments will not frighten men from ſin, what effect "would a *leſs* puniſhment denounced againſt it have? If men can "but once perſuade themſelves that the torments of Hell are not ſo "terrible, they freely give themſelves up to all licentiouſneſs, and "we know how fond men of wicked lives are of ſuch doctrine*."

To this I muſt anſwer as above, that in the argument before us, the principal point to be conſidered is, not what *may* be the conſequence of *pronouncing* the doctrine I have been combating, abſolutely *falſe*, but whether it is in reality true? God has or he has not denounced *eternal* torments to the wicked. If it be ſaid that he has, will it not be a difficulty *unſurmountable* how to make ſuch a ſentence quadrate with our uſual ideas of Deity in general; and the following *ſcripture* declarations of him in particular? viz.

The Lord is good, his mercy is everlaſting, Pſal. cv.
His throne is upheld by mercy, Prov. xx. 28.
He delighteth in mercy, Micah vii. 18.
His mercy endureth for ever, Pſal. cxxxvi.

If God has *not* denounced *eternal* torments to the wicked for their temporal crimes, what *political* conſiderations can in any degree juſtify a repreſentation of Deity in a light the moſt unfavourable that

* Vid. Dr. Jenkins, p. 271.

can

can be to his nature and attributes?? Shall it be ſaid that God's moral government of the world cannot be eſtabliſhed but by the aid and inſtrumentality of a *lie*?

Whatever might poſſibly be the caſe among the people of old, pious frauds, as ſays Dr. Burnet, are of no neceſſity or advantage to the world now *. Will it follow from a rejection of the horrid doctrine of eternal torments, that the ſinner will not be tormented at all? Or that the puniſhment he is to expect will be too ſhort and trivial to give reaſon for any painful apprehenſions about it? Nay, will it follow that he ſhall not be puniſhed to a moſt exquiſite and intolerable degree?

Will he make no account of thoſe *true* and terrible deſcriptions given us in Scripture of the miſeries of the damned, of their *rolling day and night* inceſſantly in a *lake of fire and brimſtone*, of their being tormented with the *worm* that *never dieth*, and with the *flames* of that fire, which, during their continuance in thoſe regions of miſery and wretchedneſs, *will never be quenched*? Expreſſions which, though but *metaphorical*, are yet *doctrinal*, and well calculated to give the *unrepenting* ſinner a juſt idea of the *intenſeneſs* of thoſe torments, which will moſt aſſuredly be his portion in an after ſtate. Should he therefore think it any advantage to him to be releaſed from the horrid apprehenſions of *eternal* puniſhments to come, let him know that, notwithſtanding *that*, the incenſed *God*, whom he dares to diſobey, will in juſt vindication of his injured honour and authority, *amply* revenge himſelf on his iniquitous *pate*; that a careleſs

* Againſt this kind of practice there is a moſt ſevere malediction denounced by the Prophet Jeremiah—"Curſed be he that doth the work of the Lord *deceitfully*." Jer. xlviii. 10.

neglect

neglect or wilful contempt of his kind calls and invitations to Heaven and happineſs will bring upon him moſt aſſuredly ſome dreadful effects of his diſpleaſure in Hell; and that the farther he walks on in the path of iniquity and irreligion, the nearer are his approaches to the pit of deſtruction. Bid him tell you whether, in the *firſt place*, he thinks the pleaſures of ſin for a *ſeaſon* will compenſate for the loſs of thoſe joys in Heaven, which eye hath not ſeen nor ear heard, nor which have entered into the heart of man to conceive? Or, *ſecondly*, whether he thinks he can extract ſweets enough from the former to give a reliſh to the bitterneſs of *death*, to allay the ſtings of a reproaching conſcience, or damp the rage and fury of thoſe tribulations, to which the grave will open the diſmal paſſage?

There, I imagine, it will be but ſmall conſolation to his diſtracted mind to reflect (ſhould we ſuppoſe him *then* capable of making the reflection, which may not perhaps be the caſe) that the ſhocking torments he is going to endure *may* have perhaps ſome time or another an end, unleſs he can aſſure himſelf that a *thouſand* years told in a courſe of pain and miſery will roll off as glibly and as ſwiftly as he will have the moſt horrid occaſion to *wiſh* they would, or as do the days he conſumes in vanity.

And as a thouſand years are with the Lord but as one day, how inexpreſſible will be his confuſion, how unutterable his grief and anxiety, if, ſubſequent to thoſe ſcenes of diſtreſs he has already gone through with the Devil and his angels *there*—where the *rich man lifted up his eyes, being in torment*—a thouſand years ſhall be found to bear no more proportion to the continuance of miſeries yet to come, than a day does to a thouſand years? What will be the ſtate of his mind do you think then?

Alas!

Alas! the ſenſeleſs, ſtubborn, ſelf-deceiving ſinner *reflects* not at all, and for that he is damned; he reaſons not, and therefore he is ruined. Subtle he is, but not ſagacious. A thouſand ſtratagems he can compaſs to ward off a tranſient pain and uneaſineſs, but how ideot-like is he baffled of his *everlaſting* eaſe and happineſs? How eaſily is he ſwallowed up of miſeries which in all juſt *compariſon* are eternal! Pain he abhors and would ſhun, and yet ſits he regardleſs of the pains and miſeries reſerved for him in an hereafter. Put but his finger to the candle—can he bear it though but even for a moment? But deſcribe to him, in the ſtrongeſt colours you can, the future miſeries of the damned, and what an inſenſible and deafened ear does he turn to the alarming truth? How feebly does the frightful proſpect ſtrike his infatuated mind? And why? Becauſe *that* is conſidered by him as lying at a comfortable diſtance from him, and his ſenſual delights are both nearer at hand and more correſpondent to the deſires of depraved vitiated nature. But where, let me aſk, is the prudence, or even common ſenſe, in dancing on merrily in a pleaſurable and agreeable path, which leads to a moſt dreadful precipice? Where the wiſdom of ſwimming eaſily and calmly down a ſmooth and pleaſant ſtream, which we know will terminate in a lake of fire and brimſtone; when men have been often warned too of their danger, and intreated to take a different courſe? And when the way pointed out to them, though ſomewhat diſagreeable to the diſheartened traveller at firſt, will bring him at laſt, after a few ſhort ſtages completed with reſolution, into a place *delightful* beyond expreſſion? Where nothing will be wanting which a wiſe man can poſſibly deſire, and all will be abſolutely ſecure from loſs, moleſtation, or diminution? Beſides which, let me aſk, whether there is not a ſelf-ſatisfaction and applauſe ariſing from the practice of virtue, which will, in point of real and *rational* delight, anſwer to a man *here*, as well as *hereafter*? In reſpect to their inward peace and tranquility of mind, without which life itſelf is a burthen,

burthen, the good and virtuous have evidently the advantage of the wicked. *Care* and *anxiety* are the genuine offspring of ſin; guilt will ſit hard, and heavy upon the ſinner's mind, and fill him with a thouſand ill-boding fears and apprehenſions; and the very expectation of vengeance to come, which he can never find means to ſhake off from his thoughts long together, is itſelf a *preſent* Hell to him.

But the man of virtue and integrity, whoſe chief ſtudy it is to do nothing that in any degree oppoſes the will and pleaſure of his Maker, depends, with a well grounded confidence on the Divine *Power* for a protection from impending dangers, on his *goodneſs* for a conſtant ſupply of all things neceſſary and expedient for him, and on his *pity* and *compaſſion* for a cup of comfort under all his difficulties and diſtreſſes. How, through the dark cloud of adverſity, does the divine ſpirit deſcend upon his ſoul, and chear his drooping ſpirits? How does it, even under his greateſt preſſures, inſpire him with calm reſolutions which eaſe the heavy weight of afflictions, and derive to him enjoyments not to be met with from the moſt envied proſperity? This is a ſituation which affords ſuch an inward peace and repoſe of mind, as infinitely ſurpaſſes all his other boaſted pleaſures and delights; this is the man who ſtands poſſeſſed of that peace which the world cannot give, which paſſeth all underſtanding, and which it is far more eaſy to conceive than deſcribe; this is the man who has the exalted ſatisfaction of being conſidered not only as a rational and conſiſtent individual of the univerſe, but as an amiable and ſerviceable member of ſociety: who looking on vice as a canker in community, preying upon its very vitals, is righteous out of *policy* as well as *real piety*; is anxious for the cauſe of religion, not only in honour of his God, but in tender regard to that community to which he owes his protection and every bleſſing; he knows that *godlineſs is profitable to all things*,

that

that it roots out all thoſe paſſions and rebellious principles, which tend to embroil and diſtract a nation, has a natural tendency to make men quiet and peaceable one towards another, implants in them all the amiable ſeeds of unity and concord and univerſal love, and is, in ſhort, the beſt preſervative whatever, againſt envy, hatred, and malice, and all thoſe prejudices and *party* diviſions, from whence flow thoſe many public miſchiefs which are deſtructive of the happineſs of every nation.

Theſe are the men, if haply they could be found, which ſhould be ranked among the *guardians* of a people: the men of this ſtamp, are thoſe to whom alone patriot honours and rewards are due; for theſe are they who lay the only laſting foundation for either peace, plenty, or proſperity to their country. 'Tis a prevailing ſpirit of piety and integrity only, that can give a nation a title to proſperity, and, under any of its impending calamities, inſure to it the protection of Heaven.

This, ſuch kind of reaſoning as this, will moſt probably operate with advantage upon the minds, even of the *vulgar*, better than the fierceſt flames of Hell you can aim to kindle up in their imagination, which (like lightning from Heaven) alarm, confound, and intimidate while they laſt; but, when over, leave the mind in the ſame calm and incogitant ſtate as before.

In an age ſo diſſolute and abandoned as is this, to remove from it any one of its uſual barriers againſt vice, would be a treſpaſs againſt the laws of humanity, as well as civil policy, never to be forgiven; but I would wiſh it to be conſidered, that to the ſpirit of piety and religion we owe the beſt, nay only ſecurity againſt evil practices in general; and till *that* can be more univerſally eſtabliſhed among men, it is in vain to expect any better ſucceſs from the propagation of the

doctrine of *eternal* punishments, than has hitherto been its effects; and how very small that is, the many horrid villainies, which almost each day's sun brings to light, afford but too many melancholy demonstrations.

I have all along not only supposed, but proved from Scripture, that there is a state of punishment in reserve for the wicked, sufficient to restrain from vice, all such as will seriously reflect upon the future consequences of it; but the mischief of it is, that where *passion* takes place, reason and reflection have no controul; and it is notorious, with what little reluctance men hazard every thing that is dear and valuable to them *here*, as well as *hereafter*, their reputation, their liberty, their lives, rather than not gratify their favourite propensions; and if they are at all checked in their career of forbidden pursuits, it is more I believe from the dread of *present* than of *future* punishment: and yet daily experience evinces, that *neither* will restrain those from the practice of vice, whose minds are not attuned to the enrapturing charms of virtue; which only the spirit of *Christianity* can infuse. The grand business therefore of the reformers of mankind, is to aim by all possible means to divert the stream of men's affections from the delusive sollicitations of the one, to the rational and ever-ravishing endearments of the other; to kindle in their breasts the love of God, and the religion of *Christ his Son*, which will more effectually eradicate all irregular, loose and sensual desires, than any arguments which can be deduced from the distant threats or prospects of future torments. We should study therefore how to make men *choose* to be good, rather than how to make them *fear* to be bad, since what they do once out of choice, and from principle, from a principle of *Christianity* more especially, they will repeat the oftner, and with greater chearfulness; whereas the obedience which ariseth from fear is servile, spiritless, and in the eye of Deity, at best but a mean and unmeriting service. This I mention,

not

not in order to invalidate the ſanction of future puniſhments, or as an inſinuation that there is no neceſſity for reminding men of the future miſeries which reaſon and Scripture denounce againſt vice and impiety; but as a remark, which claims ſerious conſideration, that as there is in reality no merit in the obedience, which reſults from a ſlaviſh fear and dread of the Divine vengeance: ſo neither is it ſo ſteady, permanent, and equally to be relied on, as is that which iſſues from a heart, conceiving, in the firſt place, an utter averſion to ſin, ariſing from a right idea of its intrinſic turpitude; and in the next place, from an earneſt deſire to do every thing that can render the creature an object worthy the love and beneficence of his all-holy, all juſt, and all-bountiful Creator; but diſpoſitions ſo truly amiable, rational, and eſſentially ſerviceable as theſe, nothing, as I ſaid before, but the operative principle of Chriſtianity can inſtil; it is *that* which gives, if I may ſo ſay, that *vegetative* * principle to the ſoul, without which it can no more bring forth fruits, conſtitutive of the *ſpiritual man*, than the ſeed ſown in the earth can, without the genial warmth of the ſun, and the ſucceſſive ſeaſonable refreſhments from the clouds, render an harveſt of fruits neceſſary for his *corporeal* ſupport. This to infuſe ſhould be the *ſole* endeavour of thoſe, whoſe more immediate buſineſs it is to promote, to the utmoſt of their power, the welfare, the *eternal* welfare of their fellow creatures.

* It makes, as Brockleſby ſpeaks, the nature of man, ευανθη και εγκαρπον, florid and fruitful.

FINIS.

A FEW

EXTRACTS

From a DISCOURSE concerning

ORIGEN,

AND THE

CHIEFEST OF HIS OPINIONS.

First printed in the Year 1661.

A NEW

EXTRACTS

From a DISCOURSE concerning

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EXTRACTS

From a DISCOURSE concerning

ORIGEN.

VERY appoſite to the ſubject matter of the preceding diſſertation, will be an introduction *here* of Origen's arguments, in proof of the following particulars, as ſet forth in the above-mentioned diſcourſe, viz. that the *myſtery* of the *reſurrection* is this, that we ſhall be cloathed with *etherial* bodies; that after long periods of time thoſe who ſhall have been conſigned to *future torments* will be delivered from thoſe torments, and become inhabitants of ſuch regions of the univerſe as their natures fit them for; that the earth after its *conflagration* ſhall become habitable again, and be the manſion of men and animals, &c. and that in eternal viciſſitudes.

Firſt, The myſtery of the *reſurrection* is this, that we ſhall be cloathed with *etherial* bodies.

What

What is the truth in *this* opinion muſt be learned, ſays the author of this diſcourſe, from the faith and doctrine of the goſpel, of which it is ſo eminent an article, the great βραβειον of our holy faith and obedience; and the whole *Evangelical* myſtery, ſo far as it reſpects our good and advantage, is for the recovery of mankind to this high pitch of felicity; and the *pious father* does moſt willingly reſolve his belief in this opinion into the ſentence of thoſe infallible writings. But that you may have a more orderly and demonſtrative underſtanding of what they teach us in this matter, you are to recall to your memory ſomething of what I have before diſcourſed out of the *father*, that ſo you may with one view ſee how coherent his ſpeculations are, and how much they confirm and are confirmed by the doctrine of the Goſpel. He affirms with confidence, that the ſouls of men are ſpirits *eſſentially incorporate*; that ſuch ſpirits depend much in all their operations on that body they are united with; that the elements of our *terreſtrial* compoſition are ſuch as almoſt fatally intangle us in vice, paſſion and miſery; that theſe ſouls did exiſt and act (for to what purpoſe elſe did they exiſt?) before they became viſible inhabitants of the earth; that therefore they then had at leaſt *aereal* bodies; that the purer the body with which the ſoul is united, the purer, more perfect and happy is her life and operations; beſides, that Supreme Goodneſs which made all things aſſures us, that he made all things beſt at firſt. And therefore his recovery of us to our loſt happineſs (which is the deſign and purpoſe of the Goſpel) muſt reſtore us to our better bodies and more happy habitation. In the declaration of which recovery if it be found that he promiſes us *celeſtial* bodies, 'twill be both according to what our reaſon would expect in ſo gracious a deſign, and does alſo not obſcurely intimate that *earth* was not the firſt element wherein we did exiſt. Upon theſe *principles* the *father* eſtabliſhes the preſent *dogma*, ſome of which we have already largely endeavoured to prove; the reſt are plain of themſelves, and confeſſed by all, or it is eaſy to have the

the accurate proofs of them if you think they can be doubted of: and therefore I ſhall leave you to make the beſt of them for the advantage of the *father*'s preſent *aſſertion*, betaking myſelf to ſee what Scripture ſays in the buſineſs, after I have taken two arguments in my way, which I ſhall offer to your conſideration in a more careleſs and popular manner.

1. He that is a Chriſtian and Diſciple of the Son of God hath given up himſelf to the obſervation of ſuch laws as require of him perfect holineſs and purity, univerſal abſtinence from all wrong and injuſtice, hearty and unfeigned love and good will to all mankind; and all this in the inward affection of his mind, ſo that they become his nature and the very life of his Spirit. He is by the tenor of that holy *inſtitute* to mortify every inordinate affection, to be dead to the ſenſe of bodily delights, not to be carried away with ſelf-conceit and the tickling air of fame and honour from men, not to be tranſported with anger, to have no eſteem of thoſe things the world ſo much admires, and ſo eagerly purſues, power and wealth: but cut off from all things that are without, and perfectly commanding all the allowed motions and deſires of his natural ſpirit, he is ſolely to live the life of God with entire ſubjection to his will. But do not all the world complain of the extreme difficulty of the taſk? that it is as cruel to their imagination when they think of it, and as painful to their ſenſe when they go about it, as the violent diſciſſion of their very life would be, could it be forcibly torn in pieces? Not but their *minds* are very well ſatisfied of the reaſonableneſs and juſtneſs of ſuch an undertaking, and their moſt inward light cannot but pronounce that the poſſeſſion of that life they are called to by the counſels and exhortations of the Goſpel would be a ſtate of moſt deſirable felicity; ſo that if the *law* of their *mind* had a perfect ſovereignty over the whole man, the buſineſs was done. But alas! they are drawn away by the pleaſing force of the *magic* of the *fleſh*,

and

and in deſpite of all the ſuccour which their mind, reaſon and conſcience bring, they are willingly led captive by an enemy whom they love. This is the *law of the members*, whoſe very nature is *warring* and oppoſition to the *law of the mind*: it is alſo called the will, ſenſe, or *affection of the fleſh*, which hath ſuch an eſſential enmity to *God* and whatever is divine, that it can *by no means be made ſubject to* his *law*. For the *body of death*, or the mortal body is, according to St. *Paul*, *ſinful fleſh in which dwells nothing that is good*, and the law of it is the *law of ſin and death*. And that *members*, *fleſh*, *body*, *death*, are to be taken plainly and literally, both St. *Paul*'s diſcourſe makes evident enough, and the experience and confeſſions of men confirm; who palpably feel that their tranſgreſſing the laws of God and the mind proceeds from the motions of the *earthly* body with which they are cloathed. Now theſe motions being as natural to it as *deſcent* is to heavy bodies, and as neceſſarily affecting us with the ſenſe of ſin, as fire does with warmth and heat; it follows, that our eſtabliſhment in a truly divine and ſinleſs life, which is the end of Chriſtian Religion, cannot be effected but by our obtaining ſuch a body as is fartheſt removed from the nature of our preſent *body of ſin*, that is, an heavenly or *ethereal* one.

2. You cannot but have obſerved even in thoſe who are inſtructors of the people in knowledge and piety, men, otherwiſe learned and of good capacity, a ſtrange fatal proneneſs to ſuch opinions as are as plainly repugnant and contradictious to the moſt eaſy and natural *ideas* of our mind as any can be: of which opinions many are concerning ſuch ſubjects whoſe worth and excellency ſhould make us very careful what we think of them, and always tender that we pronounce nothing of them which is injurious or mean; as God, his works, and counſels, what is holy, righteous, comely, equitable, and the like; whoſe natures rightly known and accord-

according to truth, bring the greateſt eaſe and ſatisfaction, ineffable peace and quiet, and the moſt pure and inraviſhing delight that our minds can receive from any knowledge whatever, and govern all the purpoſes and enterpriſes of our ſoul, all the actions of our lives conſiſtently, quicken and encourage us to all growth and progreſs in virtue, and whatever is good and laudable, and with unſhaken fortitude ſupport our hope, that our labours ſhall not be in vain; laſtly, which are alſo with abundant clearneſs defined in thoſe holy oracles which we all believe infallible. Whence is it then that all that light which ſhould direct us to the truth of ſuch objects is not ſeen? that we are ſo eaſily content to want all that pleaſure and peace ariſing from the knowledge of their truth; and patiently endure to live, act, and expect at random without any ſufficient grounds or coherency of reaſon? If the ſouls of men were eſſentially unlike one another, or the *ideas* of truth were not every where the ſame, my wonder would quickly ceaſe: nay, if theſe erring perſons were but affected with their odd conceits in that moderate degree of prejudice which authority is apt to beget in us, where we reſpect the man who firſt delivered them to us, I could be content to look for the reaſon of this *phænomenon* in the modeſty and humble deference of the mind itſelf: but when I ſee them believe ſuch groſs errors with ſuch eagerneſs of ſpirit, and with ſo ſettled an affection, and from a congruity and ſympathy of vital diſpoſition, I am at a loſs to find the cauſe any where but in the complexional impurity of their *earthly* bodies; whoſe foul ſteams mixing with and infecting that ſubtle inſtrument the ſoul uſes in all her ſenſes and perceptions, and by which all her operations are modified, condemn them fatally to ſuch groſs miſtakes, and to an utter inſenſibility of the contrary truths, ſo long as they are condemned to ſee nothing but through ſuch a courſe *medium*, and to labour for truth with ſuch unqualified inſtruments. And knowing that not only virtue and piety, but alſo truth and knowledge are the natural

accompliſhments of the ſoul, I conclude, according to the *father*, that that complete perfection, which by the warrant of the Goſpel we hope for in the *reſurrection*, cannot be wrought in us unleſs we be poſſeſſed of ſuch a body, whoſe purity of temper will be as ſubſervient to truth, as I find the terreſtrial one an hindrance thereto.

3. I ſaid at the beginning of this *dogma*, that the truth of it muſt be decided by the teſtimony of holy Scripture, whereof it is ſo important a part, and that the *holy father* is moſt ready to be concluded by its deciſion; therefore in the third place he argues from thence. You know St. *Paul* in his firſt *Epiſtle* to the *Corinthians*, hath a diſcourſe on purpoſe concerning the *reſurrection*; from thence therefore, if any where, we may very well hope to find a determination of the matter in hand. The *Apoſtle*, in that moſt excellent and learned diſcourſe, having firſt proved the reſurrection of our ever-bleſſed Lord and Saviour, comes at laſt to anſwer the objections of ſome incredulous and miſinformed men in that *church*, which he gives us in theſe words, *How are the dead raiſed up? and with what bodies do they come?* In which, if there be any ſenſe or force to make it worthy of an anſwer from the *Apoſtle*, it muſt be this or ſome ſuch like; How is it poſſible that thoſe bodies ſhould riſe again and be joined to the ſouls that formerly actuated them, which we ſee rotted in the grave, diſſolved into duſt, and ſcattered over the face of the earth, or evaporated into air, and diſperſed as far aſunder poſſibly as the Heaven is wide, and undergo ten thouſand ſeveral tranſmutations, and are adopted into as many ſeveral bodies, whether animals or others? To which the *Apoſtle* anſwers, not by ſaying the power of God is infinite, and his knowledge infinitely diſtinct, ſo as he can find out and recollect all thoſe wandring *atoms*, and of them recompoſe that building which once they made: but by calling *firſt* the objector *fool* for ſo groſſly miſtaking the

the queſtion, as if the Chriſtians expected the ſame *individual* body made of the ſame numerical particles of matter, which his objection ſuppoſes; whereas their doctrine of the *reſurrection* is ſomewhat like that of a grain of corn, which muſt firſt die before any thing ſpring of it, and that which does ſpring up from its death is another thing from that which is ſown and died. And then, *ſecondly*, by further informing him, that the differences of body and matter are far more numerous than he takes notice of; ſo that it is ſo far from being neceſſary that we ſhould have the ſame *individual* bodies, that there is no neceſſity we ſhould have bodies of the ſame ſort or *kind*: for the world is better ſtored than ſo, and contains *celeſtial* bodies as well as *terreſtrial*, of different worth and excellency; and that God who gives us a body as it pleaſes him, is graciouſly pleaſed to give us one in the *reſurrection* of that kind which is moſt excellent and glorious, *viz. heavenly* and *ſpiritual*; and that though we have borne the *image of the earthly Adam*, having an earthly body as he had, yet it is not neceſſary we ſhall always do ſo; for there is an *heavenly Adam* too, the *Lord*, whoſe *image we ſhall bear*, having an *heavenly* and *ſpiritual body* as he hath. And leſt we ſhould miſtake what he meant by *earthly* and *heavenly*, *animal* and *ſpiritual bodies*, and transfer theſe words to diſpoſitions in the ſoul, or uſe them improperly any other way to the countenancing any groſs or low conceit, he gives us a key of his meaning by this plain and downright affirmation, that *fleſh and blood* (a phraſe well known to ſignify the *earthly body*, and for its ſake *a man in ſuch a body*) cannot come to Heaven, or *the kingdom of God*; for it is impoſſible that ſuch a body, which is in its intrinſical nature corruptible, ſhould become incorruptible, or be fit to *inherit incorruption*. And further, you may poſſibly not think it a remark altogether impertinent, that if the *Apoſtle* had been of the mind of *Origen*'s adverſaries, it would be very hard to imagine why he ſhould give ſo long, ſo diſtinct and particular an anſwer to the queſtion. For it may

ſeem more ſuitable to the authority of ſo great a perſon, when captiouſly aſked, *With what bodies do they come?* roundly to have anſwered, *With the ſame they left behind them.*

Another argument out of the ſame *Apoſtle* may be that in his *ſecond epiſtle* to the ſame *Corinth.* *For we know, that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle was diſſolved, we have a building from God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal, in the Heavens. For in this we groan, earneſtly deſiring to be cloathed upon with our houſe which is from Heaven.* Where are plainly deſcribed two ſeveral *houſes* or bodies quite different one from the other in their *materials, duration,* and *benefit* to the inhabitant: the one is called *earthly,* and a *tabernacle* which ſhall be *diſſolved,* wherein we *groan* through the *burthenſomeneſs* of it; the other *heavenly,* and *eternal,* and hugely advantageous and *deſirable* to us: the former characters deſigning the *body* we have here upon *earth,* the latter *that* which we expect hereafter in *Heaven.* So that unleſs any thing may be any thing, and the ſame thing while the ſame be quite another thing, it is not poſſible but that that body we look for in Heaven, or at the reſurrection, ſhould be a quite different thing from that body of *fleſh and blood* we are now cloathed with, ſince it hath ſuch different properties. For unleſs the courſe concretion of *earth* as earth can be as liquid as *æther* or heavenly matter, and that which is in its own nature *diſſoluble* be *eternal,* and be actually diſſolved only to be ſet together again, or that we groan through the oppreſſion of that weight which we earneſtly deſire to be burthened with again, the body which we have here cannot (according to the *Apoſtle*) be that which we hope to have hereafter. And all the properties of the former body will, from its eſſential contexture, neceſſarily adhere to it wherever it be, and the properties of the latter are the moſt genuine reſults of *ethereal* purity; ſo that if St. *Paul,* by the *building* we are to have *from God,* by the *houſe not made with hands,* deſcribes

that

that body God will give us in the reſurrection of the juſt, he ſays the ſame with the *holy father*, that the myſtery of that happy time and change is this, that we ſhall then be cloathed with heavenly or *etherial* bodies.

This is ſufficient for the proof of this aſſertion out of Scripture; yet if you pleaſe you may over and above make trial, whether any convenient ſenſe can be made of thoſe ſo very frequent phraſes of a *mortal* body, a *corruptible* body, a body of *death*, a *vile* body, an *inglorious* and *infirm* body, a *dead* body, the *fleſh of ſin*, and the like; if ſuch bodies may be incorruptible, immortal, eternally living, never to die more, reſulgent with lucid glory like the body of Chriſt, who is the *Adam* ἐπουράνιος in the ſame ſenſe that the other *Adam* was χοϊκος, and laſtly, be the inſtruments of perfect purity, righteouſneſs and holineſs. I perſuade myſelf you will find it an hard taſk to reconcile ſuch diſcordant attributes. But to ſay that whatever the bodies we have upon earth be in their own nature, God by his omnipotent power can make them ſuch as the Goſpel promiſes they ſhall be at the reſurrection, and keep them by his almighty hand from death or decay, is to ſay, that *miracles* are very cheap with him; nay further, it is to ſay that God, where he intends us a benefit, will work a perpetual miracle to keep us in a worſe ſtate than we might arrive to by the ordinary laws and courſe of nature. For it is demonſtrable from philoſophy and apparitions, that an *aereal* body will neceſſarily fall to our ſhare upon the quitting of *this* we have; and where the ſoul is more than ordinarily advanced in the progreſs of an holy and virtuous life, that *aereal* body of hers will be in great diſpoſition to an *ethereal* purity: ſo that if the *Providence* of God would not interpoſe herſelf, but leave things in that ſtate they come to by her eternal laws, it would be much better for ſo perfect ſouls to ſtay where they are, than to be again cloathed with *fleſh and blood*. For this is plainly to climb down-

downwards, and with pretence of courteſy to remand the releaſed man to his priſon and chains. And it is very childiſh to think that *fleſh and blood* made gay without by I know not what imagined *light* and *glory*, is one pin the better for it; for if the houſe be ruinous in the materials and make of it, and ſluttiſh and unclean within, all the external painting and pargetting imaginable can neither ſecure the inhabitant from its fall, nor make their dwelling one jot more wholſome. The *moon*, as bright as ſhe looks, is as very an *earth* as this we tread on, contemn, and deſire to leave. But as hard as you will find it to make ſenſe of thoſe *phraſes* above-named which characterize our *earthly* body, if this earthly body is to come to Heaven; juſt ſo eaſy and natural are the oppoſite expreſſions which deſcribe that *heavenly* body which ſhall certainly come thither. For both the duration of it, its refulgent glory, and its eximious ſubſerviency to all purity, righteouſneſs and truth, do as properly belong to a body of *ethereal* purity, and this only, as any natural effect whatever to its true and ſpecific cauſe, as a very little ſkill in philoſophy would ſatisfy any inquirer. And what greater aſſurance can any man have that he underſtands any thing he reads, than evidently to ſee that the words are fit and appoſite, and the very ſame that all men uſe who write or ſpeak perſpicuouſly, and the *things* aſſerted ſuch as exactly anſwer to the nature of things?

Having Scripture ſo plainly on *our* ſide (for ſo for *decorum* ſake I muſt ſpeak, playing the part of an *Origeniſt*) I think I may be bold to expoſtulate with the *adverſaries*, and aſk them what it is they ſeek by their ſo eagerly-defended *fleſhly body*, and what is the prop of their tenacious confidence. For 'tis plain that we are nothing and are concerned in nothing more than what we are *conſcious of*, feel and perceive; that the ſoul *alone* is the ſubject of all ſenſe, perception, memory and affections; that what ſhe *perceives by*, is neither the fleſh nor blood, no nor the brains themſelves, nor any

any other groſs part of our bodies, but that purer and ſubtiler matter in us which is called *animal ſpirits*; that if the ſoul be an immeteria ſubſtance diſtinct from the body, 'tis as eaſily conceived, nay more eaſily, how ſhe ſhould unite with an whole *vehicle* of ſuch pure matter as with her whole *terreſtrial* body; eſpecially ſhe giving us, even in this body a *ſpecimen* of that capacity of hers, by being in her higheſt degree of vitality united with ſome portion of matter already. What is it then that they expect from the moſt refined *fleſh and blood* they can imagine, which they may not have with uſury and advantage in a body of purer conſiſtence? or what is the ſcruple that makes them ſo backward in admitting ſuch a body? to the former queſtion I make no doubt they can anſwer nothing which will not be groſs and ridiculous. To the latter I know they will ſay that the Scripture ſays otherwiſe: we ſhall ſee that more particularly at the *fifth quere*. In the mean time conſider, O ye fond doters on fleſh and blood, what we have already produced out of that ſacred treaſury of truth contrary to your dull pretenſions: and further call to mind, that as Scripture calls thoſe bodies we hope for in the reſurrection of the juſt *celeſtial* and *ſpiritual*, and terms the place of our abode at that bleſſed time the kingdom of *Heaven* and the inheritance in *light*; ſo philoſophy and aſtronomy can demonſtrate that the matter of that happy place is mere *light* and liquid *ſpirit* or *æther*. Why then do you pretend miſinterpreted Scripture contrary to all reaſon, philoſophy, and your own benefit, againſt Scripture, having philoſophy, and your advantage on its ſide; and ſince our preſent bodies by which we are inhabitants of the earth are of a *terreſtrial* concretion, and conſiſt of ſuch matter which ariſes from the earth, and which after all its *tranſmutations*, *elutriations*, and *filtrations* in the body, is not purged from the courſe tincture it had from its earthly original; and ſince the Scripture ſays that angels, the inhabitants of Heaven, are ſpirits and a flame of fire, and are called angels of light, as Heaven itſelf is light and

fire,

fire, and appear always in a lucid form, and that the *Devils* or *Dæmons* are the inhabitants of the air (whom the ſtories of apparitions and the confeſſions of witches plainly prove to have bodies of air;) what croſſneſs and madneſs is it to believe we ſhall be fellow-citizens of the angels in the kingdom of *Heaven*, and have ſuch a body, as the Apoſtle calls *heavenly* and *ſpiritual*, and yet to interpret that word *heavenly* otherwiſe than in relation to the ſubtilty and tenuity of the matter of Heaven; but to leave theſe φιλοσαρκοι, and let you further ſee that St. *Paul* did not only ſit at the feet of *Gamaliel* (from whom Mr. *Gregory* conceives he learned the analogy between the germination of a grain of corn and the reſurrection of the body) but had alſo been admitted into the *Pythagorick* ομακοειον, or rather that both he and the *divine Pythagoras* were taught by the ſame *ſpirit of truth* and holy knowledge, I will give you a taſte of that great congruity of phraſe there is in the delivery of their doctrine. And not to trouble you with many authors of that way, I will content myſelf with *Hierocles* in his commentary on the *golden verſes*, as they are called. The body of fleſh we have here upon earth he with St. *Paul* calls θνητον and ψυχικον; that which the pure and perfected ſpirits in Heaven have, he with him calls πνευματικον, as alſo φωτεινον and αυγοειδες, which plainly anſwers to St. *Paul*'s ζωμα της δοξης. He likewiſe terms it αθανατον, and αϊδιον, and αιθεριον, which is exactly the ſame with St. *Paul's having put on immortallity*, and *eternal*, and *heavenly*. He ſays likewiſe that in order to our heavenly journey we muſt firſt την θνητε ζωματος φυσιν αποδυσασθαι, and that the ζωμα ψυχικον cannot aſcend εις τον αιθεριον τοπον. What is this but that *fleſh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God?* And again—— τε θνητε ημων ζωματος, εν ῳ το αυγοειδες εγκειſαι προσπνεον τῳ αψυχῳ ζωματι ζωην· ζωη γαρ επι το αυλον ζωμα. Than which it is not poſſible to find a better comment upon that of St. *Paul*,——*Cloathed upon with our houſe which is from heaven, that mortality might be ſwallowed up of life.* Again,—— το θνητον ημων ζωμα εκ της αλογε ζωης

ζωης κ᾽ τε υλικε σωμα[illegible] συγκειμενον, ειδωλον εν τε ανθρωπε, ος εκ λογικης ϐσιας κ᾽ σωμα[illegible] αὔλε συνεςηκεν· St. *Paul*'s *outward* and *inward man*, the *earthly* and the *heavenly Adam*. He ſays alſo, that the ſpiritual vehicle of the ſoul being perfected and purged from all material *unvitalneſs* or mortality, and the lucid body being rendered pure and defæcate, we are then fit to be admitted into the company and converſe of the pure ſpirits which have ethereal bodies, and are then arrived to the angelick nature: which in the words of Scripture is, *But ye are come to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, to an innumerable company of angels, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.*——*They are equal to the angels, and are the children of God* [θεοι in *Hierocl.*] *being the children of the reſurrection.*——*If by any means I might attain to* the reſurrection of the dead. *Not as if I had already attained or was already* perfected. Laſtly, that I draw the *parallel* no further, in this *theory* of bodies he uſes the words of επεγειρειν and αναβιωσκεσθαι. I need not tell you, much leſs ſhew you, that he does not uſe ſuch words *alone*.

I ſhall trouble you with no more examples, theſe being ſufficient and clear and appoſite enough (chiefly ſome of the firſt of them, which I eſpecially intended) to ſhew you the agreement in ſtile between St. *Paul* and *Hierocles*. Now the uſe I make of it is this—'Tis notoriouſly known that the *Pythagorick* or *Platonick* doctrine concerning the different ſtates of ſpirits incorporate is the ſame with *Origen*'s; and that the words and phraſes they uſe to expreſs the different nature of the body by, with which they are cloathed, are as fit and proper (if their doctrine be true) as any that can be invented, is plain to every one that underſtands the uſe of words. Now that St. *Paul* ſhould uſe the ſame in the ſame matter and argument, yet not in the ſame ſenſe, but a quite different one, is the moſt unlikely thing

in the world; and beſides renders all endeavours of finding his ſenſe and meaning utterly fruſtrate or deſperately uncertain. But if St. *Paul* uſed them in the ſame ſenſe with thoſe *philoſophers*, then it is manifeſt that *Origen*'s doctrine of the *reſurrection* is the ſame with St. *Paul*'s, and therefore infallibly true.

There is a reverend *doctor* of our Church of eximious piety and learning (and long may he live to be a light in this perverſe generation, and the envy of thoſe that are adverſaries and afflicters of our *dear Mother*) whom I have heard to be of opinion, that this *Hierocles* of whom we have been ſpeaking was a *Chriſtian*, and who intends to encreaſe the number of his learned and uſeful writings with a *diſſertation* to prove the ſame. If this report of him be true, I make no doubt but amongſt other arguments which have perſuaded him to entertain this *paradox*, the great agreement in doctrine and phraſe betwixt the holy pen-men of Scripture and that author is not the leaſt. But to the verifying of my conjecture, you muſt expect till that reported *work* of his ſee the light.

I come now to the *Father*'s other opinion, viz. that after long periods of time thoſe who ſhall be conſigned *to future torments* will be *delivered* from thoſe torments, and become inhabitants of ſuch regions of the world as their natures fit them for.

There are in ſome men's minds, ſays the author of the diſcourſe, wonderful high reaches at great and unuſual objects: that diſpoſition of ſoul whence ſuch extraordinary offers proceed you may not unproperly call the *magnificence* of the *intellect*? which often hath ſomething of temerity in it, as the *moral* virtue of that name not ſeldom hath ſome touch of ambition. But as we are very favourable to this, and apt to pardon its ſmaller extravagances, for the ſake of thoſe high deſigns and eminent works to which they adhere: ſo by the ſame reaſon

reaſon and juſtice ought that other to be candidly ſentenced by us when it ſeems to ſlip, becauſe of thoſe raiſed and concerning diſcoveries it makes where it lights right and happily; eſpecially where it ſeems to have been betrayed by a forward and pious endeavour of doing honour to God. Which is *Origen*'s caſe here; of whom his greateſt adverſaries cannot in reaſon but confeſs, that the *error* they conceive him fallen into in this opinion proceeded from his over-great ſolicitude of rendering the ways of *Providence* clear, righteous and benign. Yet this, as ſtrange at it looks, hath its probabilities too as well as the former. For he looked upon God as making all things for their good and benefit, with this gracious deſign, that they might be happy according to their place and order in the infinite *orb of beings*. Some whereof would neceſſarily be ſo far removed from the ſtability of his bleſſed and immutable perfection, that he plainly foreſaw and wondered not at their future change and deſcent from their original integrity; which though it would not happen to them without their own fault, yet his moſt juſt and righteous eyes could not but more favourably look upon the miſcarriage, ſince it proceeded ſomewhat from that *incompoſſibility* which his own hands had wrought in their eſſential contexture, and from a too-free and careleſs uſe of ſuch natural powers and enjoyment of ſuch delights as he himſelf had made, and permitted to them in due bounds and meaſures. For it ſeems true, and not diſhonourable to God, that ſin itſelf proceeds from no power of the ſinner's own making, neither is the pleaſure of it from any ſuitableneſs and congruity which he deviſed; for he finds them both made ready to his hand: only he was ſo careleſs and unhappy as to tranſpoſe things from their due places, and make ſuch combinations of them as were to his own damage in the event, and ſuch as were not primarily intended by that moſt wiſe and benevolent *mind* which made and ordered all things to the beſt they were capable of.

That *Eternal Mind* therefore making all things out of a principle of infinite love, and for the good and happineſs of the things themſelves, and ſeeing what he had made and how he had made them, and what was likely to be the lot of ſome of them from the neceſſary unperfectneſs of their natures, if their future ill hap was like to be infinitely more ſharp and dolorous than all the good they ſhould enjoy from him till that calamity befel them grateful and pleaſant, his great compaſſion certainly would have perſuaded him quickly to annihilate him; or rather his wiſdom would have judged it more decorous never to have made them. For aſſuredly he needed them not in any reſpect, leſt of all as they were miſerable. But we ſee ſuch *mutable* creatures made, and hear nothing of their *annihilation*; (as indeed it would be very ſtrange we ſhould, for this would be as much as to ſay, God had made ſuch *beings* as he could not continue in being with conſiſtency with his own attributes: that I may not add that poſſibly ſuch was the manner of the production of all things as makes *annihilation* impoſſible) therefore we may be aſſured there are ſuch reſerves in his moſt wiſe and gracious *providence*, as will both vindicate his ſovereign goodneſs and wiſdom from all juſt diſparagement, and take ſuch courſe with, and ſo diſpoſe of all his creatures, as they ſhall never be but in ſuch a condition, which, all things conſidered, will be far more eligible than never to have been. Amongſt which ways and diſpoſitions of *Providence*, wherein his wiſdom, rectitude and mercy all concur, *puniſhment* is not the leaſt, nor unprofitable to the puniſhed. And this ſharper kind of favour hath a very juſt and righteous place in ſuch creatures as are by nature mutable. For this natural mutability paſſed not into an actual declination from their better principles of life without their *fault*, and ſuffering a poſſibility of being worſe to prevail above an actual power of continuing better. And therefore *Providence* hath interwove in the natures of things, and all ſtates and conditions of life, ſuch acerbities and incommodities as may give check to them when they

they are deſcending lower than they ought, and ſeaſonably remind them of the better condition they have left.

But if this gentler ſmart and uneaſineſs will not reclaim them, but they for all that ſtill further purſue forbidden and uncertain pleaſures, and think them not dearly bought though mixed with bitterneſs; yet we are not ſtraight to conclude that *Providence* hath given them over, either as utterly unfit for her care and diſcipline, or degenerated beyond her power of cure and emendation. For beſide her ordinary and natural ways of nurture and correction, ſhe can, and will, when it ſeems fit or neceſſary, with a ſeverer hand ſcourge theſe rebels to her gentler laws, and contemners of her milder rebukes. And ſuch will be that *day* of *fiery vengeance*, when the inferior elements of nature ſhall melt with fervent heat, the earth and all the works thereon be burnt up, and the air be filled with ſuffocating ſmoak, which ſhe ſhall ſend up from her inflamed entrails. Into which far-ſpreading lake of ſlow-conſuming fire and ſulphureous ſtench the unreclaimable devils and obſtinately-wicked men ſhall be, by the righteous hand of God, precipitated. A ſad pitiable fate and torture unſufferable! but no doubt as juſt as great. Juſt, I ſay, not only according to the eſtimation of modern *theology* (which from an exceſs of compliment to the juſtice of God becomes almoſt as rude and troubleſome as the aſs in the fable, who did not fawn upon, but invade his maſter, and which tragically pronounces, that the leaſt *peccadillo* highly deſerves the greateſt puniſhment conceivable;) but alſo in the compute and judgment of that all-righteous *mind* which judges and orders all things by the living law of equity. But what though it be ſo great and juſt, is it therefore ſo quite different from the reaſon of all other puniſhments inflicted by God or man, that there is nothing in it of that *end* for which they are inflicted? They are *curative*, and for the emendation of the party ſuffering; but this, if it be eternal in the *ſcholaſtic* ſenſe of the word,

leaves

leaves no place for the bettering of the ſufferers, who are never to get out of this inexplicable labyrinth of woe and miſery. Or becauſe this exceeds all other puniſhments imaginable, muſt it alſo ſo infinitely tranſcend the very meaſures and proportions of this kind of *diſtributive juſtice?* If not, why ſhould we think that the pain and ſmart of it ſhall be infinitely great and long, when the pleaſure reaped by the tranſgreſſion which brought the puniſhment is not in any degree equal; and when a ſhorter torture may make the puniſhed change their mind, or leave it very probable they would do ſo were they out of their torture, and in an opportunity to ſhew it? And to imagine that God ſuffers any real injury and detriment from the tranſgreſſions of a peccable creature, which muſt (ſay they) be infinite, becauſe he is ſo, and therefore deſerve a puniſhment in all reſpects infinite, is to talk of God very meanly, and too much after the manner of men; and to ſet ſuch a rule for the meaſuring the demerit of a fault by, as will make all ſins equal, and which they themſelves confeſs will not univerſally hold good towards any perſon beſides God, and therefore may be juſtly ſuſpected to be a falſe one.

Now to think theſe miſerable ſouls are ſo far amiſs as to be beyond the power of all redreſs and reſtitution, is to ſuppoſe God made ſome of his creatures very untowardly; and that when he pronounced they were all *very good*, he looked only upon the primitive ſtate they were in when they came freſh out of his gracious hands, and was ſo taken with that, that he omitted to caſt his all-comprehenſive eyes to all poſſible conditions they might afterwards fall into. For certainly if he had done ſo, and ſeen this never-to-be-ended doom of intolerable pain and anguiſh of body and mind, the infinite compaſſionateneſs of his bleſſed nature would ſcarcely have given ſo chearful an approbation to the works of his hands. For none of them are *good* to him, as advantaging him ought; and thoſe of them he

he foreſaw would be ſo remedileſly calamitous as this *hypotheſis* ſuppoſes, would have been ſo far from being *good* as to themſelves, that it would have been the greateſt favour God could do them never to have brought them into being. But then to think they are not beyond the power of redreſs and recovery, and that that great puniſhment they ſhall undergo in the end of this world may contribute much thereto, and yet to imagine they ſhall for all this their better diſpoſition be ſtill kept in it for ever and ever, is to fix ſo harſh a note upon the mercy and equity of the righteous judge of all the world, that the ſame temper in a man we ſhould for ever execrate and abominate. And that they are in a poſſibility of being better, if God ſo pleaſe, and do not purpoſely hinder it, is not improbably concluded by the father from hence, That ſin wherein they are ſo obdurately ſettled, though it hath extinguiſhed or ſilenced the *divine life* in them, and for the preſent ſubjected them only to the ſenſe, reliſh and exerciſe of the natural or *animal*, yet it hath left them their reaſon and underſtanding, ſuch as it is, conſideration and memory, which like mercenary ſoldiers will fight on either ſide, and incline to and ſerve that *life* which is moſt powerful: if therefore the vigorous alliciency of the brutiſh nature be abated, thoſe *powers* will liſten to better counſels, and reſume the ſeeds and inchoation of a better life and nature. And certainly a ſearching ceaſeleſs pain ſpreading through ſoul and body will ſo abate and conſume all that joy they formerly took in their brutiſh rebellion, that any offer of releaſe will be welcome to them now the tumult and hurry of their former luſts and eager affections is ſlackened, which alone before made them incapable of better advice; and their cloſe-adhering pain which ſticks to them, and ſcorches them worſe than *Hercules*'s *ſhirt*, ſhould, methinks, neceſſarily force them to take up ſtrong and peremptory reſolutions and indignation againſt thoſe courſes, whoſe fruits they now feel ſo direful to them.

What

What is it then that ſhould make the merciful *Governor* of Heaven and earth and *hell* too, the compaſſionate *Father of ſpirits*, either forcibly to keep off and prevent this natural courſe of things, or, which is worſe, ſuffer thoſe offers and preparations which it induces for the bettering the preſent condition of ſo great and ſo conſiderable a part of his creation, and for the putting of them in a way of return to what he at firſt made them, to come to nought? If we look but into the *natural world*, we ſhall find that no diſpoſition of matter to the ſuſception of life is rendered void and fruſtrate; but that there is always ready at hand ſo fruitful a *principle* as perfects and completes whatever is preſented to its further vivification: and yet this *principle* is but the *brute* obſcure ſhadow of that Almighty *Goodneſs* and exuberant *life* which actuates and manages the moral and intellectual world. Surely then no preparation happens here which is not carried onwards as far as it is capable; eſpecially ſince this may be done, and yet theſe miſerable ſouls we are ſpeaking of pay ſoundly for their rebellious tranſgreſſions by a very long, exceeding great and intolerable torture both of body and mind. And indeed, by how much greater it is, by ſo much ſurer may we be that it will ſometimes have an end by the neceſſity of nature. *Si gravis, brevis*, takes place here too; for it being unconceivable how the ſoul ſhould ſuffer any pain or torture but by the harſh and diſcordant motions of the body wherewith ſhe is vitally united, if this union ever ceaſe, ſhe will become ſenſeleſs; and this union being conditional upon certain terms on both ſides, and the conditions being ſuch as are not neceſſarily at all times preſent to either of them, it may very well be thought that it may be diſſolved. For if the induction of an unnatural foulneſs and impurity, or an overvehement agitation into the blood and ſpirits and other fluid parts of the body, if old age itſelf can make the ſoul quit her unfit tenement, what ſhall we think ſhe will do when it is all on fire, when all the motions of it are but one continued great pain? Which diſpoſition

poſition of body when come to its height by long continuance, is certainly far more contrary to that vital temper the ſoul requires in the body ſhe will livingly join with, than either coarſeneſs of blood or conſumption of animal moiſture. For as if any actually-perceived pleaſure was that which tempted and drew out the ſoul to join with her body, no man would ſay ſhe would ever unite with that body from whoſe croſs conſtitution ſhe ſhould be affected with nought but pain: ſo where that congruity in her which diſpoſes her to that union is more deeply pitched in her *imperceptive powers*, a man would be apt to think nevertheleſs, that ſhe could not vitally take hold of any body from conjunction with which ſhe ſhould after feel no motions but ſuch as would torture her. And we may eaſily perſuade ourſelves, that that diſpoſition of body which will not prolicite the ſoul to join with it when ſhe is free, and her *unfelt appetite* catching, cannot for ever tie her to it when forced upon her by her ſad fate. And the matter ſhe is then ſurrounded with being all of that *unvital* temper, it ſeems neceſſary that ſhe ſhould ceaſe from all life and ſenſe. So that witherſoever we look, whether to the gracious providence of God, or the neceſſity of the nature of things, we find ſome probable hope that the puniſhment of the *damned*, as it implies the ſenſe of pain, ſhall not be *eternal* in the higheſt ſenſe of the word. And the Scripture too may ſeem to favour us, in that it calls this dreadful doom by the name of *eternal death*, which one would think did very ſtrangely ſet out that ſtate and condition wherein is the higheſt and moſt pungent ſenſe; but it does very appoſitely expreſs the ſenſe of *Origen*'s hypotheſis explained after the latter and more probable way. But whether their releaſe be by any change wrought in the diſpoſition of their ſpirits, but without *death*, or whether by an *eſcape*, as it were, by *dying* to the body ſo tortured, there is no doubt to be made but that both ways they may come into play again, and try their fortunes once more in ſuch regions of the world as Providence judges fit for them. For all things

were made that they might have their being, and ſuch of them as are capable of life and ſenſe, and yet never exerciſe it, had as good not be at all, for they would be uſeleſs both to themſelves and others; but certainly there never were nor ever will be ſuch things in the world, which was created, and is governed by that *eternal mind* which does nothing fooliſhly and in vain. And though that raging fire which will in the conſummation of all things ſeize upon the earth, will render it and the adjoining *atmoſphere* unhabitable for the preſent; yet that this ruinous defacement of things will extend through the whole compaſs of nature, is neither the belief of *Chriſtians*, nor the aſſertion of ſuch *philoſophers* as were, through their ſkill in the conſtitution of the world, fit to judge of ſuch *theories*. And therefore if any man can conceive any of theſe ſouls which ſhall be puniſhed in that *ſulphureous lake* fit to emerge out of it, he need not be at a loſs for habitations for them elſewhere.

But if the other way be more probable, that there is no getting out but by *death*, which is rather a dying *in* it; yet ſince they therefore only die becauſe the matter all about them is then ſuch as they cannot livingly unite with it, though their radical principles of vitality are ſtill ſafe and unperiſhable; and ſince that matter which for the preſent is ſo deadly, is as capable as ever of ſuch modifications as are vital and healthful, and will, even by the courſe of nature, after long periods of time, ſettle again into ſuch a wholſome temper; what ſhould hinder but that theſe puniſhed ſouls, whom long vexing pain drove from all commerce with matter, and caſt them into a ſenſeleſs ſleep, will after their long inactivity awake again into life and action, when all things are become ſo freſh and fit to receive them? For if *Providence* hath been ſo favourable as to eſtabliſh ſo gracious an order in the nature and courſe of things as will lead thoſe miſerable ſpirits to a *releaſe* at laſt, *ſhe* certainly will not be unwilling that they ſhould live again when all things conſpire

to

to give them life, and they continue capable of receiving it. But I am ſtepping, methinks, before I was aware, ſays the author, into the laſt opinion of the *learned father*, which is this, viz.

That the earth after her *conflagration* ſhall become habitable again, and be the manſion of *men* and other *animals*, and this in *eternal viciſſitudes*.

The *philoſopher* in his *politics* ſays, thoſe inſtruments are the beſt contrived, and do their work beſt, which ſerve but one effect and end. But ſurely it is an argument of a larger and more comprehenſive wiſdom, to make one and the ſame thing ſerve to ſeveral good purpoſes; as we ſee Providence hath done both in the bodies of particular *animals*, and alſo of that great and *univerſal* one the world. And the ſame courſe ſhe takes in the *conflagration* of the earth; for that one fire will be the juſt and ſalutary puniſhment of rebellious ſpirits, and the reſtoration of the earth grown old and effete unto an healthful genital ſtrength and verdure. And ſo wonderfully ſportful is ſhe (as I may ſo ſpeak with reverence) in the government of the world, and the aſcents and deſcents of her great *wheel* are ſo unexpected, and ſo ſeemingly unlike one another, (yet the ſame hand and counſel turns all, and to the ſame end) that that very region of the world, and the face of things in it, which even now ſeemed miſerable and forlorn, and the region of malediction, a delivery from which was thought well bought at the price of *death* and utter inſenſibility, even this at the next ſucceeding *roll* becomes a flouriſhing paradiſe, thick ſet with vigorous life, and adorned with all the charms and gaiety of freſh youthful pleaſure. For the *holy father* might think it no extravagant conjecture, to imagine that the proceſs and conſequences of that great fire will be ſomewhat the ſame with thoſe we daily obſerve upon earth in bodies ſubjected to the operation of fire. Moſt of which conſiſt of a twofold prin-

ciple, the one more denſe and ſolid, the other ſubtle and tenuious: but when fire is applied to the whole, and ſpreads its inſinuating active *atoms* through every commiſſure of parts where either it finds or can make its way, the finer and more agitable particles, by this new heat and motion got amongſt them, iſſue out in ſmoak and vapour from thoſe places of reſtraint where they before lay more ſtill, into the free and open air; but the more heavy and ſolid are left behind, as which the too-ſubtle parts of fire, notwithſtanding all their activity, could not carry away with them, being overpowered by their exceſs of magnitude. And though we obſerve not any farther progreſs in ordinary fires, and care not what becomes of the evaporated parts of the conſumed body; yet where either uſe or curioſity leads our obſervation on further, and we would not have thoſe parts diſſipated and loſt, we then find that they which ſteamed forth in a vaporous rarity, being kept in by fit *receivers*, and falling in cloſely with one another, do at laſt fall down again in a watery conſiſtence, retaining the ſame nature they had before they were forced out of the body they belonged to. And if the *return* of this deſcending dew was ſo ordered, that it might have time enough to inſinuate itſelf again equally through all the vacuities it made in the body by its departure, it would no doubt bind and conſolidate the looſer parts thereof, and tincture the whole concretion with its ſpecific virtue and qualities. For this is no more than letting ground wrought out of heart lie fallow for ſome years, and it again will anſwer the hopes and reward the labour of its tiller.

Though this example of the ordinary operation of fire and its conſequences, for many reaſons, falls ſhort of thoſe advantages for vitality and fertility which may be expected from the *conflagration* of the *earth*; yet as it is, it lets us ſee, in ſome meaſure, what will be the neceſſary effect of that piece of divine *chemiſtry*, in which ſeas and rivers, and all the evaporable parts of the upper region of the earth,

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(for the *metallic* regions below are too ſolid to be much concerned in this matter) and all things thereon, will in a thick confuſed cloud mount aloft and cover the face of Heaven, filling the air with pitchy darkneſs; but their own gravity, and that cauſe which limits the extent of the *atmoſphere*, will neceſſarily keep them below the purer regions of Heaven or *ether*: ſo that rolling up and down in the lower vault of Heaven, and kept yet from deſcending by that ſmothering heat that is amongſt them, that intenſe fire under them, and the continual aſcent of new vaporous ſteams, they will at laſt, when theſe cauſes abate, and themſelves become more crowded and confert through their exceſſive copiouſneſs, fall down in trickling dewy ſhowers, and mix again with that great heap of *aſhes* which covers the face of the earth, and make her fruitful and vegetative, and fill her emptied channels with wholeſome ſtreams; the air alſo will be kindly cooled and moiſtened by thoſe long-deſcending ſhowers which paſs through it. So that ſo far as concerns material preparations of life, here may be a *new* world again, if God ſo pleaſe. And unleſs he purpoſely put a ſtop to the courſe of nature, the great *principle* of vegetative life will neceſſarily ſhape the matter, when duly modified, into all kind of trees, plants, herbs and flowers; for the inferior *ſpirit of the world* acts not by choice, but fatally; and being eſſentially ſtored with an univerſal *ſeminality*, will not fail to bring her treaſure into view when invited by congruous and ſequacious diſpoſitions of matter. And methinks 'tis very odd there ſhould be ſo fair and pleaſant a garden, and none to enjoy the fruits and fragrancy of it. But if philoſophy hath rightly determined that the ſouls of *brutes* are ſpirits (which for my own part I think is done with demonſtrative evidence) and therefore remain after all fates whatever undiminiſhable and indiſſipable in their entire ſubſtances, we need not fear thoſe pleaſant fruits will grow up and dye unenjoyed.

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For let the conciliating principle of *ſouls* and *matter* be what it will, either *ſpermatic* only, or *ſenſitive* too, the ſouls of *brutes* will not fail to unite with it now it is become ſo fit. If the former, their expergefaction into life will then be as neceſſary as the growth of herbs and flowers: if the latter, then ſince the pleaſures of ſenſitive life are the top of the felicity they are capable of, and conſequently their ſtrongeſt deſires are bent thitherward and without any check, they will as certainly unite with matter whereby they may enjoy them, as they will eat meat caſt to them when their appetite is edged with a keen hunger. But ſince the former is more rational, and is found in the ſouls of *men* and *dæmons* as well as beaſts, what ſhould hinder it from having the ſame effect in all, and ſo both earth and air be again repleniſhed with their reſpective inhabitants; and for the earth it may be further ſaid, that the *decorum* and congruity of the thing perſuades it. For ſince there ſeems little leſs than a neceſſity that ſhe ſhould be furniſhed with all manner of fruits and *brute animals*, and that the greateſt part and chiefeſt kinds of thoſe fruits are ſuch as are either little regarded or cannot be come at by the beaſts, (that I may not add how quickly the ſoil where they grow and the plants that bear them will decay and come to nothing without human culture;) and further, ſince many *ſpecies* of beaſts themſelves ſeem ſo made with relation to man, that without him they would be ill provided for, or too much expoſed to ſuch as would prey upon them, and the exerciſe of their chief powers could not be called forth, and many appetites and affections which hugely pleaſe them would find little or no gratification; this congruity of things, I ſay, would almoſt perſuade one that *man* ought alſo to appear on the earth, to be the father of this great family, the lord, governor, patron and defender of all the creatures therein. And there is nothing in the nature of God to make us doubt of the truth of theſe pleaſant conjectures, but much which favours them. For, for theſe better and more perfect ſpirits to continue yet in being,

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and yet to be kept for ever dead and ſenſeleſs, is to fill the world with that which is perfectly uſeleſs and in vain, (as I intimated above;) and to be capable not only of life, but alſo upon a new trial of their fortune to be in more than a poſſibility of making a better choice than that they paid ſo dearly for, and of returning in due time to that ſtate of holineſs and felicity God made them for, (to all which worthy purpoſes they may now have a fair opportunity) and yet after all this to ſay that God is ſo far from furthering and helping on theſe hopeful beginnings, that, on the contrary, by a peremptory will and violent hand he ſtrangles them, is at leaſt to ſay this, that there is no certain nor probable arguing from the attributes of God, by which I, through a certain infirmity of my nature, was always the moſt ſtrongly convinced that I was by any way of arguing whatever. But if a man may with any probability argue from the nature of God in ſuch ſubjects and about ſuch effects as depend on his operation; I, in the perſon of *Origen*, deſire his adverſaries briefly to compare the ſtate of things after the *conflagration* of the earth with that which they ſay was before any thing was made. God was then infinitely *good* and *kind*, and by that his infinite goodneſs was moved to create the world; ſuch is he ſtill, for his bleſſed nature is immutable. The things afterward created by him were not then in being; here they are all in being, and want only his *permiſſive* or *ordering* hand of Providence. They were then only in a poſſibility of being well and happily made; here they are in the very next ſtep to being ſo even by the neceſſary laws of nature. Thoſe reaſonable creatures he then made were not indeed ſinners and tranſgreſſors; yet they were made of ſuch a nature as they might very likely become ſuch afterward, and they have now ſoundly ſmarted for it, and have been afflicted even unto *death*, and at this term revenge itſelf ſtops: then certainly juſt and righteous puniſhment inflicted by the *Father of Mercies* and father of the puniſhed will not go beyond it; which if it do not, it will

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be very hard for them to give any tolerable reaſon why the earth ſhall not become habitable again after her *conflagration* and purification by fire, and be the manſion of *men* and other *animals*, as well as it was in the firſt production of it.

This is the firſt part of the *father's* opinion. But if this *firſt* was granted for true, and but *one* reſtoration of the earth and replanting of her with all her proper inhabitants was acknowledged, he that believes this would find no difficulty in believing that eternal *viciſſitude* and infinite repetition of *conflagrations* and *re-productions* which in the *ſecond* part of the *dogma* he aſſerts. For ſince nothing periſhes out of the compaſs of univerſal nature, neither *ſpirit* nor *matter*, it is plain there will be always ready at hand both the materials and inhabitants of the *thouſandth* habitable *earth* as well as of the *ſecond*; and that moſt benign *principle* which made and governs all things, is neither leſſened nor changed at that *thouſandth* period from what he was at the *ſecond*.

You may now poſſibly expect that the *pious father* ſhould confirm his doctrine out of Scripture, as in moſt of the former he did. But here he bids you call to mind the advertiſement he gave you at the beginning of his ſecond *dogma*, and conſider how neceſſary and decorous it was that the holy pen-men of Scripture ſhould not run out into ſuch abſtruſe natural *theories*, which ſo few of thoſe they were to *chriſtianize* would be capable of, but keep themſelves within the bounds of thoſe few plain articles which were neceſſary to the reforming the world, and begetting in the minds of the ſimpleſt a firm hope of life and immortality hereafter, and deterring all men from the ways of ſin and unrighteouſneſs by that ſad afterclap they muſt expect in the end of this world, leaving all further conſiderations not repugnant to theſe to the laudable curioſity of ſuch as nature and education had fitted for ſuch enquiries. Yet will he

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not wholly fruſtrate your expectation, for I find him making uſe of theſe following places of Scripture in behalf of his opinion; *Of old haſt thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They ſhall periſh, but thou endureſt; yea all of them ſhall wax old like a garment: as a veſture ſhalt thou change them, and they ſhall be changed; but thou art the ſame.* Where he ſays ſuch a *periſhing* is *exegetically* ſignified, both of the earth and regions of the air, as is conſiſtent with *but* a *change*; but where there is only a change the ſubſtance is not deſtroyed. And this change being as the change of a garment worn out or decaying, ſuppoſes not only a change for another, (which it certainly does, unleſs he that hath worn out one garment, and after goes naked, be ſaid to change his cloaths) but alſo for a newer and better. Alſo that of St. *Paul, The faſhion of this world paſſes away*, i. e. like a *turning ſcene*, to exhibit a freſh and new repreſentation of things; and if only the σχημα of *this* world, or the preſent outward dreſs and appearance of things, go off, the ſubſtance is ſuppoſed to remain intire. And that of the prophet *Iſaiah, Behold I make new heavens and a new earth: and the former ſhall not be remembered nor come into mind.* How exactly does this agree with his *hypotheſis*, whether you interpret the latter part of it concerning the excellency of the vernant youth and ſpring of the renewed world above the ſqualid and decrepit age of the old one, or concerning that perfect *oblivion* in the inhabitants of the new that ever they lived before the old? And that *new heavens* and *new earth* may be underſtood in a *phyſical* ſenſe, both St. *Peter* and St. *John* make it not utterly improbable. For though our *tranſlation* ſeems to lay an *emphaſis* upon *we* in that place of *Peter*, as if the expected *new heavens* and *earth*, according to promiſe, were thoſe habitations of glory which Chriſt ſhall give to his faithful ſubjects in his heavenly kingdom: yet there is nothing in the *Greek* which countenances ſuch an *emphaſis*. The whole is plainly thus, *That fire ſhall melt and diſſolve all the com-*

buſtible elements of nature; *yet for all that, according as he hath promiſed, we expect there ſhall be new heavens and new earth, or heavens and earth again, whoſe inhabitants ſhall be better and more righteous than thoſe of the decaying and corrupted world are.* And the viſion of a *new heaven* and *new earth* in St. *John* does ſo immediately ſucceed the *univerſal judgment*, and the caſting of death and *hades* into the lake of fire, that it would almoſt perſuade a man that is to ſucceed it alſo in order of time, ſince there is ſo great a congruity in the thing for it ſo to do. For ſuppoſe this opinion true, and to have been a part of the *apocalyptical viſions*, what fitter and more natural place could you aſſign it amongſt them than that it now hath, according to our preſent interpretation;

I will trouble you but with one argument more, though conſiſting of more texts than one, but all in the ſame epiſtle of St. *Peter*. *And ſpared not the whole world, but preſerved* ΟΓΔΟΟΝ ΝΩΕ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗΣ ΚΗΡΥΚΑ, *having brought the flood upon the world of the ungodly. This they are willingly ignorant of, that there were of old heavens and earth, conſiſting of and placed amidſt the waters by the word of God. By which conſtitution of things the world that then was, being overflowed with water, periſhed. But the heavens and earth which now are by the ſame word are kept in ſtore, reſerved for fire at the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.* To theſe texts add that which we cited before, *but we look for new heavens and a new earth*; and then compare the ſeveral paſſages in them one with another: for example, the *phyſical* ſtate and conſtitution of things before the *flood* is called the *old* or original *world*, the *then world*, the *heavens and earth* which were *of old*; that after the *flood* is called the *heavens and earth* which *now are*, and in reſpect of the former might as properly be called the *new world*, as *that* is called the *old world* in reſpect of it; that which is to ſucceed the burning of this, is (as we have conjectured) termed *new*

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heavens and a *new earth* in reſpect of the *ſecond*. The *firſt* of theſe three worlds is ſaid to *periſh* or be deſtroyed by water for the puniſhment of the ungodly, yet ſo as *Noah* was preſerved to be a preacher of righteouſneſs, as ſome interpreters expound it. The *ſecond* is ſaid to be reſerved to the deſtruction of fire for the perdition of ungodly men, that ſo the *third* may be the habitation of righteouſneſs.

Now ſince they are ſo diſtinctly deſcribed as ſeveral *worlds*, and ſince the changes happening to them are called *deſtructions* alike, and their ends are the ſame, to wit, the puniſhment of the ungodly: why ſhould we imagine ſo vaſt a difference, that the deſtruction of the *firſt* ſhould be followed with a new plantation of mankind by *Noah* and his ſons, of animals by the pairs of each kind reſerved in the ark, and of all kind of plants by their own fruitful ſeminalities, but nothing follow upon the deſtruction of the *ſecond* but a perfect irrecoverable exciſion of all things; when yet the way that this is to be deſtroyed by does as naturally lead to a re-production as that of the other, but after a far longer time. There is one thing more I am to put you in mind of, which I had from a very good hand, concerning one of the texts above cited, to wit, about that odd diſturbed order of words in this ſentence, αλλ᾽ ογδοον Νωε δικαιοσυνης κηρυκα εφυλαξε· for ſuch it muſt needs ſeem according to that interpretation which makes it ογδοον κηρυκα· and that other which makes him be called ογδοος, becauſe he was one of the *eight* ſaved in the ark, is harſh, and without example in Scripture, ſo far as I remember. What then if there be a *myſtery* in the buſineſs? (as you know numbers have been commonly uſed to this purpoſe by the ancient wiſdom both holy and profane) and as *Enoch*, who was *tranſlated*, is called the *ſeventh* from *Adam*, as a type of that expected *ſabbatiſm* in the laſt day of the *millennial hebdomade* and of this world: ſo *Noah*, who begun the world again,

is called the *eighth*, (not from *Adam*) as a *figure* ſignifying this, that the ſimply-laſt period of this lower world was not then come to an end, but was ſtill to be counted onward; and the production or drawing out of the exiſtence of things being here *ſymbolically* taught, it would be more expreſſly done by reckoning upward in the *numeral ſcale*, than by beginning again at the *firſt* of that long *hebdomade*.

But enough of theſe fanciful conjectures, as alſo of the arguments from Scripture to confirm this laſt opinion of *Origen*. Unto all which if you in the perſon of others make anſwer and ſay, that there is no neceſſity that theſe places ſhould be ſo interpreted as the *father* interprets them, but that other convenient ſenſes may be put upon them, I am perfectly of your mind; but yet further reply:

Firſt, That they whoſe anſwer you have formed for them are commonly ſo ſuperſtitious, that they will not admit of a *philoſophical* concluſion, though warranted by the attributes of God and neceſſity of nature rightly underſtood, and be ſuch as was not decorous nor becoming the ſimplicity of the Goſpel to be expreſſly and of ſet purpoſe taught by the holy writers of Scripture, who were only to mind the greater and more neceſſary doctrines of Chriſtian faith and life, unleſs it alſo bring the teſtimonials of Divine Writ.

Secondly, Though theſe *texts* ſhould have a more eſpecial reſpect to ſome other ſenſe than that we have given them, yet why may it not be that ours alſo was intended in ſome degree by the *Holy Spirit*? for ſince the holieſt and moſt intellectual perſons would be very prone to fall into this opinion, which they plainly ſaw ſo worthy of God and conſentaneous to reaſon, but yet could not but with ſome fearfulneſs fully embrace it, becauſe like to be unuſual

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and not in general vogue; it is not ſtrange that ſome places of Scripture ſhould be ſo contrived, as not obſcurely to ſing the ſame note their own thoughts had been harping on before, and ſo give boldneſs and aſſurance to their conceptions: for a little touch or intimation would be enough for them ſo well prepared aforehand; and as for others, they either might not be fit for, or not deſerve a plainer inſtruction.

Laſtly, Whoever they be in whoſe name you have made this *exception*, of what church, ſect, or way ſoever, I doubt not they would have far fewer articles in their creeds and confeſſions than they now probably have, and muſt profeſs the belief of fewer opinions than now 'tis likely they do, if ſo be they thought all groundleſs which were not built on ſuch texts of Scripture as would admit of no other tolerable and plauſible expoſition than that they give of them. And therefore I demand of them in the *father*'s behalf, that which they in equity ought not deny him, that his opinion ſtand as probably true, and the Scriptures cited by him as commodiouſly interpreted, till ſuch time as they bring better arguments, more agreeing with the nature of things and the attributes of God, and clearer places of Scripture for the truth of the contrary.

I have now given you an account of thoſe reaſons and grounds the learned and pious *father* had for thoſe *ſix* capital errors ſome of the ancients have charged him with, and under which attainder he ſtill lies from their authority; and have therewith anſwered your *fourth quere*. Wherein I have punctually obſerved your commands, in giving you thoſe reaſons only by which I find him to have maintained his opinions; and have waved many other very material or plauſible conſiderations for confirming the ſame, which ſome later authors have uſed with much danger, I have feared, to their leſs-ſettled (or, as they ſpeak now-adays, free) readers; and

have alſo omitted thoſe injections rather than ſtudied thoughts which my own melancholick fancy hath oft with too great importunity obtruded on my mind: which ſometimes are ſo ſtrong in me (I will not to you diſſemble my infirmity) that all the charms of reverend names of churches, of articles, of confeſſions, of univerſally-approved ſyſtems, have had much ado to expel them, or ſo far abate their force, that I was not carried away by them from that ſtability and ſobriety of ſpirit upon which I deſire to build all my conceptions. Before I come to your *fifth quere*, I muſt crave pardon of his *venerable aſhes*, if I have any where diſadvantaged his cauſe, either by my unſkilful management of his reaſons, or by omitting any more conſiderable and convincing than thoſe I have produced out of his writings. For the general opinion of the learned, that the tranſlations of them were ſo ſacrilegiouſly mangled and performed with ſo little judgment and faithfulneſs, made me never care to look much into them, ſince I could not be certain whether I read the mind of *Origen*, or ſome very mean author; and therefore I was now forced, that I might obey your commands in ſome meaſure, to tumble them over as my hand led me, and where by chance I ſpied any hopes that there was ſomething there handled proper for my purpoſe, to uſe the beſt judgment I had in conjecturing which was likely to be the genuine iſſue of *Origen*'s contemplative *genius*, and which the ſpurious interpolations of another. In which tumultuary labour 'tis no wonder if ſeveral things eſcaped me far more fit to appear in his defence than theſe are which by chance I light upon.

FINIS.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

END AND DESIGN

OF

CHRIST's DEATH.

In a LETTER to a FRIEND.

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CHRIST's DEATH.

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

DEAR SIR,

I THANK you much for the favour of your further thoughts on the ſubject of our laſt diſpute, to which I wiſh I could have comprized my anſwer within a more moderate compaſs; though the number of pages, I imagine, will not give offence, provided they afford, as I hope they will, ſatisfaction in point of argument.

That the prophecy in Iſaiah (Chap. iii.) is applicable to the perſon and paſſion of Jeſus Chriſt, to the mean and diſtreſſed condition of his life, and the painful and ignominious nature of his death, I am

thoroughly convinced—I am in no doubt but that in him the whole prophecy was minutely fulfilled—that he was the propheſied *man of ſorrows---intimately acquainted with grief*---he on whom the *Lord* was *pleaſed to lay the iniquity of us all*, and that, as the Apoſtle, to whom you refer me, ſpeaks, *he appeared to put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf.*

But what mean we, in the firſt place, by the iniquity of us all? And what, ſecondly, by his appearing to put away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf?

Why by the one, ſay you, is meant the guilt derived to us from Adam's tranſgreſſion—by the other, an atonement or an equivalent ſatisfaction for that derived tranſgreſſion by his death upon the croſs; an hypotheſis each of them ſo entirely repugnant to *natural* reaſon, that nothing leſs than the authority of revelation, of which there is none, can render either in any the leaſt degree credible.

Natural reaſon aſſures me, that ſin is the ſin of him only who commits it, and that to ſuppoſe otherwiſe, would ſerve only to confound the individualities of men, to *indiſcriminate* the guilty and the innocent, and to make the righteous and the wicked equally reprehenſible in the eye of Deity. And if this is an idea reconcileable with right reaſon, I know not what inconſiſtencies may not lay claim to its ſacred ſanction. Yet a doctrine which right reaſon cannot comprehend, nothing but revelation, as I ſaid before, can determine to be true. Thither therefore, my dear Sir, let us direct our ſteps, to thoſe particular paſſages more eſpecially, to which you yourſelf have directed our view.

As in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.

By

By one man ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin.

Do not theſe paſſages, ſay you, imply that the *guilt* of Adam's tranſgreſſion deſcended to every one of his offspring? No—the fatal *conſequences* of that guilt did, if you will, and were removed (thanks be to Heaven for the important bleſſing) by the death of Jeſus Chriſt. The guilt was of a quite different kind of conſideration, and could only, in reaſon, have remained with the tranſgreſſors had our Saviour not died.

But what mean I, ſay you, by the diſtinction made above between the *guilt* of original ſin, and the fatal *conſequence* of that guilt?

Why the guilt of original ſin, as flowing from Adam, conſiſted in a tranſgreſſion of a law, in a breach of a poſitive command of the Almighty. The *guilty* therefore, in that caſe, could be none elſe but thoſe who were parties in ſuch breach, and the *innocent*, thoſe of courſe who ſtood clear of the offence.

But it does not follow that where the immediate guilt *did not*, there none of its fatal *conſequences* could reach. I may, by my own folly and indiſcretion, involve my poſterity in difficulties and diſtreſſes, ariſing either from the *natural* effects of the tranſgreſſion, or from ſome judicial token of the Almighty's diſpleaſure, which it never may be in their power to remove. But where, let me aſk, lies the *offence* in that caſe? With me or with my poſterity? If with the latter, equally with the former; tell me wherein conſiſts the difference between innocence and guilt, between virtue and vice, between the righteous and the wicked?

But a *releaſe* from the guilt of original ſin is plainly enough, ſay you, aſcribed to our Saviour's paſſion, &c. *By his ſtripes we are healed.* And a manifeſt proof of our guilt follows of courſe; for a releaſe from the *guilt* of a ſin neceſſarily ſuppoſes a prior *ſentence* upon that guilt. Undoubtedly it does; and no one will diſpute but that the *general iniquity* mentioned above (in other words original ſin) ſaid too to have been removed by the merits of our Saviour, was ſome actual tranſgreſſion, not a ſin of an imputative kind. But ſins were committed (where and how is ſhewn in my treatiſe on the *Lapſe*) ſome *peculiar* tranſgreſſions committed, by the whole race of mankind, which rendered them, from their *birth*, obnoxious to divine vengeance. Theſe to remove was the whole and ſole deſign of our Saviour's coming upon earth. But how to remove them? What, by an *atonement*, an *equivalent ſatisfaction* for them by his death? No—to remove them from the deſerved wrath and indignation of Heaven; or rather to remove from men's minds thoſe guilty fears and apprehenſions concerning them, from which they could only be relieved by thoſe comfortable truths he was ſent to declare.

For men in general were always more ſenſible of their duty, than inclined to the practice of it; and therefore every commiſſion of evil produced not only a conſciouſneſs of its guilt, but a fearful looking for of that judgment it deſerved; owing to thoſe ſtrong impreſſions of a *God*, and the many obligations to him which reaſon, or revelation more probably, implanted in their breaſts. Under the preſſure therefore of an accumulated weight of preſumptuous wilful tranſgreſſions, what confidence could men have of the divine favour and forgiveneſs? Their diſobedience had evidently rendered them obnoxious to God's wrath; what title then could they plead for an exemption from a puniſhment which he might ſo juſtly inflict on them?

In

In ſuch a ſtate of deſpondency as this was the world, more or leſs, from the fall of the firſt, to the coming of the ſecond Adam. And whatever hopes the heathen world might conceive from the obſervance of ſacrifices and the like, yet were thoſe hopes at beſt but faint and unſatisfactory, though they gave their *firſt born for their tranſgreſſions, the fruit of their body for the ſin of their ſoul*, they were in a ſtate of doubt and uncertainty notwithſtanding; had no aſſurance as yet that God would remember their ſins and iniquities no more. And even under the Moſaic diſpenſation we find, that though ſacrifices were preſcribed as an atonement for ſins of a leſſer kind, yet for tranſgreſſions of an heinous capital nature there was no proviſion at all made, no means of remiſſion appointed. No; this was the great work reſerved for our Saviour himſelf to accompliſh; 'twas he, and he alone, who was to preach remiſſion of ſins in an unlimited degree (unlimited, I mean, as to the nature of their crime) upon the limited but reaſonable terms of the Goſpel. *For this end*, ſays he, *I was born, and for this end came I into the world, that I might bear witneſs to the truth.* The truth! what truth? what truth is that to which does our Saviour ſay he came to bear witneſs? Why to the truth of religion; to religion truly ſuch, which had been miſerably obſcured by ſome vain and impious pretenſions to that name then in being; and whoſe moſt comfortable truth was God's *mercy* and *compaſſion* to all thoſe who, through the fall of Adam, added to their own perſonal guilt, had from age to age wandered in all that labyrinth of ſin, ignorance and error, which too naturally enſued from that firſt moſt perverſe act of diſobedience. Well therefore might the Apoſtle call it a *faithful ſaying and worthy of all acceptation, that Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners*: for who could do it more effectually, than he who came to ſhew them the *way and means* of ſalvation? When therefore we conſider our Saviour in this light, we ſhall ſee ſufficiently into the force and emphaſis of thoſe many ſtrong expreſſions in Scripture con-

concerning the end and deſign of his coming into the world, without putting on them that unreaſonable interpretation which you ſeem to think they were intended to convey; eſpecially if you conſider further, which I ſhall hereafter ſhew, that thoſe very expreſſions are many of them merely *metaphorical* and *alluſive*. But before I proceed to that point, I muſt beg leave to make one obſervation on your explication of thoſe remarkable words of our Saviour above recited, viz. *For this end was I born, and for this end came I into the world, to bear witneſs unto the truth.*

" This text, ſay you, relates to all the truths in general which " were to be atteſted by him; but it can relate to none with greater " propriety than to the truth of his being the Saviour of the world " from ſin and miſery, by his own ſufferings and death." Which is as much as to ſay, that a witneſs to a truth, and the thing witneſſed to be true, are one and the ſame thing; or that the truth of his dying to ſave ſinners was what he was born to give teſtimony to, and that his birth was in fact a witneſs to the end and deſign of his death. This, Sir, is the only inference I can draw from your reaſoning on that text, but how the common rules of reaſoning will ſupport it, I leave you to conſider.

And now to return. That Chriſt came to make known to mankind the way and means of ſalvation, it ſeems evident, from his declaring himſelf to be the *way* and the *truth* and the *light*; but that it was for his ſake alone that we enjoy the benefit of that way and that truth and that light, I can no more believe, than I can imaginine all the world to have been created in a ſtate of ſin, ignorance and miſery, purely that God might ſhew his regard to Jeſus Chriſt, by redeeming them, for *his* ſake, from a ſtate ſo entirely wretched and diſconſolate.

What

What then, you will aſk, can be the import of thoſe ſeemingly ſtrong expreſſions ſo frequently to be met with in holy writ, ſuch as *redemption*, *ſatisfaction*, *ſacrifice*, *atonement*, *propitiation*, &c. when applied to our Saviour, if they do not mean the actual pardon of our ſins through his name? Why all that the Scriptures can be ſuppoſed to mean by them, or we in fact have occaſion to wiſh from them, is a declaration (in various terms and alluſions) of that very pardon.

It has been uſual with the Almighty, when he would perpetuate the remembrance of any promiſe to the world, to appoint ſome *commemorative ſign* of that promiſe, which at the ſame time that it ſerved for a *ſtanding monument* of his goodneſs and compaſſion, was a kind of *pledge* for the ſecurity of what he promiſed, as much to be relied on, as the oath that he ſware. And accordingly there being in the Moſaic diſpenſation ſome treſpaſſes of a leſſer kind for which God intended to make ſome favourable allowances, it pleaſed him to appoint, under the ſymbol of thoſe ſeveral *ſacrifices* enjoined them, a *ſign* and *ſeal* of each particular indulgence; which by the *aſſurance* they were meant to convey of God's pardon and forgiveneſs for ſuch and ſuch crimes, might aptly enough be termed a *propitiation*, a *reconciliation*, a *redemption*, &c. And it is notorious that the *blood* of ſlain beaſts, when offered up in ſacrifice, was always called the *blood* of the *covenant*, or an *atonement*, &c. in alluſion to which the blood of Chriſt in the Goſpel is termed, in ſome places, an *atonement*, in ſome a *propitiation*, a *ſacrifice*, or a *redemption*: in other places it is called a ſign---a ſign of a new or better covenant, as being a means of aſſuring us of ſome more important bleſſings than were propoſed or promiſed under the law. To which we may add, that the *ſin offering* among the Jews was ſaid to *reconcile* them to God, and that therefore it is no wonder, if in alluſion to *that*, Chriſt himſelf is ſaid to reconcile us to God by his blood,

though

though there be not any real *merit* or *efficacy* in the one to procure pardon and forgiveneſs, more than appears to have been in the other, the pardon granted, even through the mediation of Chriſt, being in effect the reſult of God's *free grace*.

The merit and efficacy of Chriſt's death conſiſt not in its being an *equivalent* for ſin, but on being, by the grace and acceptance of God, a ſign only or ſeal of a better covenant propoſed to us in the Goſpel, than was exhibited under the law. It is the grace of God (not the blood of Chriſt) ſays the Apoſtle, that has brought ſalvation: and again, Chriſt brought life and immortality to light (by the merit of his death? No) by the Goſpel.

Again.—There is one text advanced by you in confirmation of your opinion concerning the end and deſign of Chriſt's death, which, when rightly underſtood, will, I think, add very great ſtrength to my own: it is this—As Moſes lifted up the ſerpent in the wilderneſs even ſo muſt the Son of man be lifted up; that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh but have everlaſting life.

Now to what has this text an alluſion? Why to the brazen ſerpent which Moſes, by God's command, lifted up in the wilderneſs; to the intent that when the people looked upon *that*, they might be cured from the wounds they had received from ſome *real* ſerpents, which were ſent to puniſh them for their murmurings againſt God and againſt Moſes.

By their murmurings they had brought upon themſelves a calamity they had deſerved; but by their ſubmiſſion, added to Moſes's interceſſion, God, who delighteth not in the death of a ſinner, was moved to pity, pardon and relieve them. Well; the ſerpent was lifted

lifted up, and the people looked and were healed; even ſo, ſays our Saviour, muſt the ſon of man be lifted up, that whoſoever, &c. *i. e.* my being lifted up on the croſs ſhall ſerve as a *ſtanding monument* of God's pardon and forgiveneſs for the ſins of the whole world, in like manner as was the lifting up of the ſerpent in the wilderneſs a ſtanding *monument* and *aſſurance* to the Iſraelites of the forgiveneſs of theirs. And as ſuch an aſſurance was *neceſſary* for the *comfort* of *mankind*, ſo the teſtimony which Chriſt gave of it by his *death* was *therefore neceſſary*, becauſe of all others the moſt convincing and unqueſtionable.

But then, ſay you, the people looked, and were *really* and in *fact* healed from their wounds; in juſtice therefore to the alluſion, Chriſt undoubtedly meant to inform us, that by the *circumſtance* of his death we ſhould be as *really* and effectually healed of our ſpiritual wounds, as they were of their carnal. And ſo in fact, and to all intents and purpoſes, we are; we have a promiſe of the one, equal to their *real experience* of the other. But do you imagine that they (the Iſraelites) aſcribed, or that it was intended by the Almighty, that they ſhould aſcribe all their good fortune to any real *intrinſic* merit in the ſerpent? or that we ſhould infer any thing more from the alluſion quoted above, or that quoted by St. John, (viz. *they ſhall look on him whom they pierced*) than that the ſame kind of *aſſurance* ſhould ariſe to us of the pardon of our ſins from the lifting up of Chriſt on the croſs, as was conveyed to the Iſraelites by the ſerpent in the wilderneſs?

Once more——*We have an advocate with the Father*, ſays St. John, *Jeſus Chriſt the righteous, and he is the propitiation of our ſins.* Now here the term *propitiation* bears evidently an alluſion which by no means ſignifies a *ſatisfaction* for ſin, but only a *commemoration* of God's pardon and forgiveneſs. For ſuch was the *feaſt* of *pro-*

pitiation among the Jews, which was inſtituted on purpoſe to *commemorate* the goodneſs of God in the pardon of the idolatry of the Iſraelites in worſhipping the golden calf.

The truth is, the abſurdity of ſuppoſing all mankind involved in the guilt of original ſin, (ſuppoſing by original ſin Adam's tranſgreſſion) obliges men to have recourſe to an imaginary *efficacious* merit in the death of Chriſt, which deſtitute of *that* is meritorious enough for all the purpoſes, for which he can reaſonably have been ſuppoſed to have died. His dying in teſtimony of God's *entering into covenant* with mankind for the pardon of their ſins, at the ſame time that he exemplified in his life the innocence of a lamb, is ſufficient enough, I think, to entitle him to the name of *Saviour*, and that *Lamb of God which taketh away the ſins of the world*, without making him an actual *equivalent* for ſin.

And I would fain know what foundation there is in reaſon for ſuppoſing ſin ſo exceeding ſinful as to call for the ſuppoſed all-ſufficient merits of our Saviour for its atonement? Why muſt God neceſſarily require a ſatisfaction of that kind? Why his juſtice, you will ſay, reſtrains him from *remitting* the puniſhment due to the violation of his laws, and contempt of his authority, upon milder and more eaſy terms. If that be the caſe, I would then aſk what is your idea of that ſame attribute of the Divine Being called juſtice? Juſtice in the Creator (in like manner as in the creature) conſiſts, as I apprehend, in his acting conſiſtently with the reaſon and fitneſs of things, and agreeably to the obligation and circumſtances of his nature. To which definition of the Divine Juſtice you will probably reply, that as obedience being eternally and eſſentially due to God's laws, a breach of that obedience, not amply atoned for, could by no means be diſpenſed with by *God* without an inconſiſtent act of injuſtice to himſelf.

Here

Here lies that fatal rock on which the reaſoning of ſuch numbers in life have ſplit: 'tis from this erroneous conception of the Divine Juſtice, that ſo many extravagant and unwarrantable concluſions have been drawn, concerning both the nature of Jeſus Chriſt, and the end and deſign of his appearance upon earth. For, framing to themſelves an idea of all ſins being *infinite*, in their nature, by their being committed againſt God, an *infinite* Being, they, at once conclude, that it requires, in order to its pardon, an *infinite* ſatisfaction. And as no being, of a *finite* nature, is ſuppoſed ſufficient for the purpoſes of an infinite concern, what remains but that Deity *himſelf*, in the *perſon of Jeſus Chriſt*, came down from Heaven to make *ſatisfaction to himſelf*. The abſurdity of theſe conjectures will, I think, ſufficiently appear, by conſidering, firſt, that ſins cannot, in the reaſon of things, be *infinite* in their nature; nor, in the ſecond place, the *juſtice* of God ſubverſive of his *mercy*.

As to the *firſt*, I need only obſerve, that if all ſins are *infinite*, there is evidently no difference between one ſin and another: none can poſſibly be greater than *infinite*; conſequently all, in that caſe, muſt be *equal*. And then, *ſecondly*, with regard to the *juſtice* of God, it is evident that Deity cannot act more conſiſtently with *that* attribute, than by ſhewing *mercy* and compaſſion to the *offenders*; in dealing with them agreeably to the infirmities of their nature, and to thoſe many unhappy circumſtances, under which they were ſent into this world.

And here it is that *righteouſneſs and mercy have kiſſed each other*. Here it is that *God is juſt, and a juſtifier* of his frail ſinful creatures. How? And upon what terms? Upon terms which militate the *unalterable* rules of juſtice? Yes, ſuch in fact is the caſe, if,

if, without the death of the *innocent Jeſus* alone, there would neceſſarily have enſued, from the guilt of a tranſgreſſion, in which only *two* were concerned, the ruin, the *eternal* ruin of mankind; from the want of wnat is called an *infinite* ſatisfaction.

This is a ſuppoſition which, I am ſure, has no manner of foundation, either in reaſon or revelation: Jeſus Chriſt has, by God's grace and compaſſion, opened to us the *way* and *means* of *ſalvation*, and may therefore be truly ſaid to come to *ſave ſinners*. Nay, he has *waſhed* us, if you will, from our ſins by *his blood*, for it was ſhed upon the croſs in teſtimony of the *truth*; in teſtimony of that *comfortable truth*, I mean, the *pre-ordained remiſſion of ſins* upon the terms of the Goſpel.

But to proceed—If it was intended that Chriſt ſhould, in a *literal* ſenſe, bear our ſins, and be puniſhed for our tranſgreſſions, what follows but that God made an *authoritative* ſacrifice of *innocence* to his *juſtice*. For it is evident that Chriſt's *calm* ſubmiſſion to his fate was reſult of a reſolute obedience to his *Father*'s will *only*. *Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me; nevertheleſs, not my will but thine be done* *.

* I would wiſh the reader to have recourſe to ſome paſſages on this ſubject, illuſtrative of what has been advanced above, in a very learned and engaging work, intitled, The apology of Benjamin Ben Mordecai to his friends for embracing Chriſtianity, Letter 5.

So

So that your account of the Scripture doctrine of Salvation, or of our obtaining pardon and reconciliation with God through the blood of Chriſt, (conſidered, I mean, as an *equivalent* for ſin) is not, Sir, I think, ſo agreeable to reaſon as you ſeem to imagine, or the concluſions which we muſt make from conſidering the divine attributes of mercy and juſtice, as acting conſiſtently with each other, ſince they would then manifeſtly claſh with, or be abſorbed in each other. Juſtice would receive ſuch a kind of ſatisfaction as God, conſiſtently with his mercy, could not require, and the latter be entirely ſwallowed up in the former.

Mercy (with reſpect to the Divine Being, I mean) conſiſts, and only conſiſts, in remitting the puniſhment which juſtice has a right to demand, and juſtice in approving it upon wiſe and equitable terms. And unleſs we place the Divine Juſtice upon ſuch a footing as this, where ſhall we find a foundation for the diſplay of his mercy? Where ſhall we find objects for the exerciſe of the *latter*, if a full *complete* ſatisfaction is made to the *former*? ſuch an one, I mean, as conſiſts in an *equivalency* for ſin. And I might aſk too, what one perſon could, in the nature of the thing, be ſufficient to make ſuch a ſatisfaction, ſuppoſing it to be required? For when the authority of the divine laws came to be violated by the imputed ſins of millions upon millions, how could the juſtice *due* to that *authority* be ſatisfied by the puniſhment of but *one*? For either it was *neceſſary* that God's juſtice ſhould receive a *complete* ſatisfaction, or it was *not*; if it was not, then the death of our Saviour, for that purpoſe, was not *neceſſary*; if the contrary is alledged, then the ſufferings of Chriſt could not be *ſufficient* for that end.

A perſon who knew no ſin dies for the ſins of the whole world: God accepts that death in *lieu* of that obedience---what then? God, you ſay, had a right to the obedience of *every* individual of his

his creation, and he accepts of the obedience of *one* in their ſtead. But how can one be equal to millions? Can a partial be equal to an univerſal obedience? How then can the want of the latter (viz. an *univerſal* obedience) be accepted by God, and a *complete* ſatisfaction be made at the ſame time to himſelf? Here is *mercy* if you will, but nothing at all of *juſtice*; not that *kind* of juſtice for the ſatisfaction of which, you ſay, it was neceſſary Chriſt ſhould die.

But then, ſay you, I am not ſuppoſing mere man to die, and to make this ſatisfaction. No; had he been one of the higheſt order in the ſcale of created beings, he could have done nothing to have merited our pardon and forgiveneſs with God; for ſin being infinite in its nature, none but the Deity himſelf could render an equivalent for it, and therefore it was that he condeſcended to come down from Heaven, and ſuffer in the perſon of our Saviour. But then if God only could make a ſatisfaction to himſelf or his juſtice, what has the death of Chriſt to do in this affair? Either the ſuffering of a *human* creature was neceſſary to atone for human tranſgreſſions, and then ſomething *leſs* than the Deity was to make ſatisfaction to God's juſtice; or the ſuffering of a human creature was not neceſſary, becauſe inſufficient, and then the conſequence will be that Chriſt's death was not neceſſary, as an *equivalent* I mean, for ſin. For it can never, I preſume, be urged, that the ſuppoſed *Godhead* of our Saviour could ſuffer on the croſs (the firſt article of our *church* ſuppoſes the contrary) and if not *that*, then muſt it be the *human* nature to which it was united that ſuffered; and if that, then a being ſomewhat *leſs* than infinite was intended for procuring pardon for mankind, and conſequently no argument, by the bye, of the divinity or godhead of our Saviour can be drawn from the circumſtance of his death; nor does your account of our obtaining pardon and reconciliation with God *through the ſufferings* of Chriſt conſiſt with the proofs you think the Scripture gives us that he is *very God*.

But

But perhaps you will ſay, though it was not poſſible that the Godhead could ſuffer in the perſon of our Saviour, yet it does not therefore follow that it was not before his death united to the divine nature, *i. e.* the argument of the Godhead not being capable of ſuffering, is no proof againſt the aſſertion of its being joined at *firſt* to the *human* nature of our Saviour. This we will, for argument ſake, allow. But then that Chriſt's death was *neceſſary* in order to atone for men's tranſgreſſions, as an *infinite* ſatisfaction for crimes committed againſt an infinite being, when at the ſame time it appears that he could only ſuffer in his finite nature and capacity, what is this but a plain and obvious contradiction?

In ſhort, it does not appear either that ſin ſtood in need of that *infinite* ſatisfaction you ſuppoſe to be due to God's juſtice; or if it did, that Chriſt's death was ſufficient for that end, even upon the ſuppoſition of his having a *ſhare* in the Deity.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours moſt ſincerely.

A REPLY

But perhaps you will say, though it was not possible that the Godhead could suffer in the person of our Saviour, yet it does not therefore follow that it was not before his death united to the divine nature, i. e. the argument of the Godhead not being capable of suffering, is no proof against the assertion of its being joined at first to the human nature of our Saviour. This we will, for argument sake, allow. But then that Christ's death was necessary in order to atone for man's transgressions, as an adequate satisfaction for crimes committed against an infinite being, when at the same time it appears that he could only suffer in his finite nature and capacity, what is this but a plain and obvious contradiction?

In short, it does not appear what but sin stood in need of that infinite satisfaction you suppose to be due to God's justice; or if it did, that Christ's death was sufficient for that end, even upon the supposition of his having a Power in the Deity.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely.

A REPLY

A

REPLY

TO

Mr. P——'s SECOND LETTER,

On the End and Design of CHRIST's DEATH.

DEAR SIR,

THE favour of your reply to my Obſervations on the End and Deſign of Chriſt's Death, demands my acknowledgment with thanks, at the ſame time that I find myſelf under a neceſſity of acquainting you that the arguments urged by you, in ſupport of your objections to my ſentiments on that ſubject, are far from being concluſive enough, to make me view the matter in debate in a light different from that in which it appeared to me at firſt. And yet whatever may be our difference of opinions in literary diſquiſitions, it will make none, I hope, in our friendſhip. We may think

 together

together as *friends*, though we agree not altogether as *divines*. Nor would I, by any means, purſue this, or any other topick of enquiry at the expence of your good-will: and am at the ſame time willing to hope that, if erroneous my conceptions, my deſign will appear juſt and defenſible, in proportion to the importance of its object, viz. the cauſe of Chriſtianity, which to be univerſally embraced needs only to be ſtripped of thoſe ugly diſguiſes under which ſome well-intentioned but miſtaken zealots have too induſtriouſly and ridiculouſly recommended it to the world, and then pleaded reaſon and Scripture for their authority. Certain I am, that among thoſe who are *ſincere* unbelievers, or infidels upon *principle*, or want of *conviction* (of which ſort there are undoubtedly not a few, and they only are the adverſaries worth regarding) the major part take their prejudices *only* from ſome *unſcriptural* tenets unwarrantably palmed upon the world for true ſound genuine Chriſtianity. 'Tis a wrong interpretation of Scripture, here and there advanced, which theſe miſtake for Scripture itſelf. And I am ſorry to ſee ſo many, among its teachers and preachers, implicitly drawing *their rule* of faith, rather from the *compilers of creeds* and *commentators*, than from that true *critical* examination and interpretation, which and which alone ſhould be their guide, in their enquiries into Scripture verity——but of this no more at preſent.

You open your reply, Sir, to my obſervations, with a charge againſt me, of running from the ſubject, by an excurſion about *original* ſin; which therefore you, without ceremony, paſs over as a topic quite foreign to the point in debate.

" I aſk you, you tell me, for what ſins Chriſt died? and then repreſent you as anſwering, for the ſins of the whole world, and as meaning by the ſins of the whole world, the ſins only of two people.

" To

" To this, ſay you, my anſwer is, that your queſtion is nothing at all to the purpoſe. If, Sir, you recollect the inference you drew from your long ſtring of quotations from Iſaiah, you will, I believe, upon ſecond thoughts acknowledge that the queſtion of which you complain was far from being either unſeaſonable, impertinent, or even unneceſſary. Here, ſay you, we ſee all mankind are repreſented as *ſinners*, and conſequently as objects of Divine *Wrath*; but in order to free them from that wrath, the Meſſiah came into the world and the Lord laid on him the *iniquity of us all.*"

If mankind are repreſented by the *Prophet* Iſaiah, as objects of God's wrath, removable *only* by the death of Chriſt: was it impertinent to aſk wherein conſiſted the *nature* of thoſe ſins to which the Prophet alludes? whether they were of an *hereditary*, or of an *actual perſonal* kind? whether he conſidered mankind as objects of Divine Wrath on account of our own, or our firſt parents tranſgreſſions? That to the latter the Prophet alludes many are abſurd enough to conceive, and if I have miſrepreſented you in ranking your opinion with theirs, I heartily aſk your pardon for the offence, and with pleaſure quit the ſubject.

To proceed then to the point more immediately under conſideration, and to thoſe rules for interpreting Scripture language by which *my* ſenſe of it is to be judged. They are theſe:

Firſt, " In things relating to the common ſalvation, the plain and obvious ſenſe of the words of Holy Scripture is to be received as the true one; and

Secondly, " This *plain obvious* ſenſe of words is never to be departed from, unleſs it is neceſſary, either becauſe it is contrary to

reaſon, or beeauſe it would make a ſacred writer contradict himſelf, or ſome *other* inſpired writer.

Thirdly, " *Figurative* expreſſions are to be interpreted by the meaning of *plain* expreſſions relating to the ſame things, but not *vice verſa*."

Theſe are rules for interpreting Scripture which you deduce from the following poſtulatum, viz. " It is allowed on all hands that in things relating to the ſalvation of mankind, in which the meaneſt capacities are as much intereſted as the moſt knowing and wiſe, the ſacred penmen deliver their ſenſe in the moſt plain, eaſy, and intelligible manner."

Your meaning here, I ſuppoſe, is that in things relating to ſalvation, the ſacred writers deliver their ſentiments in terms, the *plain* and *obvious* ſenſe of which is *that* in which we are bound to receive and underſtand them. The queſtion then remaining to be conſidered is, what you mean by the *plain* and *obvious* ſenſe of words? If by theſe you mean their *primary* and *literal* acceptation, the *firſt* rule, if it proves any thing, proves too much; for then (to inſtance only in one particular) either a right interpretation of our Saviour's meaning in thoſe words, *this is my body*, is eſſential to ſalvation, or it is not: if it is, then a belief of *tranſubſtantiation* is neceſſary to ſalvation, the *plain* and *obvious* ſenſe of thoſe words implying nothing leſs.

But if to *plain*, *eaſy*, *obvious*, *intelligible* terms, you do not mean to fix invariably a *primary literal* acceptation of words, you grant me all I contend for in interpreting Scripture language; and then it will follow that by the firſt *rule* for interpreting Scripture language, we are not to underſtand *invariably* a *primary literal* interpretation;

pretation; and ſecondly, that a *plain* and *obvious* interpretation of Scripture, may be departed from without offering violence to the *ſecond* rule; and what more did I contend for, as requiſite for an enquiry into the ſenſe of Scripture in general, and of thoſe emphatical expreſſions in particular, which relate to the end and deſign of Chriſt's death; for theſe, if not interpreted into ſome other ſenſe, than what a *plain* and *obvious* one conveys (conveys either by way of metaphor, alluſion or *accommodation*) fix a ſtandard of interpretation, from which you muſt think it neceſſary at times to depart.

When therefore I depart from your ſenſe of Scripture, on the end and deſign of Chriſt's death, it is not "becauſe I think it contradictory to reaſon, to allow that there can be any merit in the ſufferings and death of Chriſt's *human* nature," but *becauſe* it is contradictory to reaſon, to adhere to a bare *literal* interpretation of Scripture, when a *figurative* one is the moſt natural, obvious and intelligible.

But to proceed. You miſtake me much, in ſuppoſing me capable of "puzzling myſelf about the idea of the one *ſupreme* being united to humanity," as I am convinced that Scripture advances not ſuch an impious abſurdity, and that therefore the horrid hypotheſis is no neceſſary object of enquiry at all. And if an aſſimilation of it, to an union of the ſoul and body in man, conveys a ſatisfactory idea of it in your mind, you can ſuppoſe a kind of diviſibility and ſeparality in the Deity, which I leave you to account for in the beſt manner you can.

We come now to that *third* rule for interpreting Scripture, which I at firſt paſſed over as totally *unintelligible*, till you yourſelf luckily ſtepped in to give it an explanation.

Figurative

Figurative expreſſions, ſay you, are to be interpreted by the meaning of *plain* expreſſions relating to the ſame thing. In other words, *figurative* expreſſions are to be interpreted into words of a *literal* meaning, for ſay you, "*thus* Chriſt is called the *Lamb* of God, and is ſaid to be our *paſſover* ſacrificed for us." Now theſe expreſſions, at the ſame time that you cannot help acknowledging them to be *alluſive*, you virtually expound (by the following queſtion and anſwer) into a ſenſe quite different and diſtinct from it; and even into a *literal* explication. "For how, ſay you, are theſe *expreſſions* which allude to the Paſchal Lamb, to be underſtood? Why undoubtedly, you anſwer, by the *plain obvious* meaning of thoſe texts, which aſſure us that by his death and blood he ſaved us from our ſins, and reconciled us to God." Now, Sir, if inſtead of this *confuſed* reconciliation of texts, you had ſaid that the expreſſions alluding to the Paſchal Lamb, were to be interpreted into a ſimilar kind of alluſion, to what the texts alluded to were known to bear, I believe you would then have come much nearer the point, than you ſeem to be at preſent.

Thus much, Sir, for the application of thoſe *eſtabliſhed* rules for interpreting Scripture language, to your *own* mode of reaſoning upon paſſages relative to the end and deſign of Chriſt dying. Let us now ſee how they tally with *mine*, why no more "than light does with darkneſs, truth with abſolute falſehood, or Chriſtianity with Mahometaniſm.

"When the ſacred penmen ſay one thing in the moſt plain intelligible manner, you will have it, that they meant the direct contrary." Indeed Sir! how ſo? Why when they ſay that Chriſt was our *ſacrificer*, our *ranſom*, our *propitiation*; according to you, they meant that he was *not* our ſacrificer, our ranſom, our propitiation

tion—If I plead guilty to the indictment, take heed that thou thyſelf art not alſo brought under the ſame condemnation.

I am the door; ſays our Saviour, *I am the good* ſhepherd; *I am the* vine. Now, Sir, canſt thou read theſe expreſs *plain* and *obvious* declarations concerning our Saviour, declarations uttered by himſelf, and ſay, he was in reality *no* door, *no* actual ſhepherd, *no grape* bearing branch——I will not preſs you for an anſwer, nor dwell upon his *bearing* our ſorrows, his *purging* us, &c. by his blood.

But yet *my* interpretation, notwithſtanding, is not conſiſtent with the honeſty and ſincerity of the ſacred writers. "For as the ſalvation of mankind is a ſubject of the greateſt importance, the nature of the thing required, that it ſhould be treated with the utmoſt plainneſs; the ſacred writers therefore cannot be ſuppoſed to have acted fairly or honeſtly, if in ſpeaking of it, they meant the contrary to what they expreſs;"—True—But what if, after all, the unfairneſs or diſhoneſty lies not in the *ſacred writers*, but in their *interpreters* and *tranſlators?* What if, whilſt the former are manifeſtly ſpeaking one thing, the latter think another? Let God and the Scripture be true, and every man, every commentator a lyar. And are you ſure, my dear Sir, that *you* judge from even your own favourite rules of interpreting Scripture? Are you ſure that *you* are not, on the contrary, a ſlave to the *ipſe dixit* of ſome blundering wrong-headed annotator? But to proceed——

You tell me "I explain *plain* texts by *figures*, when I ought to explain the *former* by the *latter*. The law, ſay you, is ſaid to be our *ſchoolmaſter* to bring us by types, prefigurations, &c. unto Chriſt; and again it is ſaid to be the *ſhadow* of good things to come: ſo that we are not to explain the *types* and *prefigurations*, the *ſhadow* of what Chriſt

Chriſt was to do for us, by what he is expreſſly and plainly ſaid to have done in the Goſpel; we are not to turn the *ſubſtance* into a *ſhadow*."

The *law*, I own, is a good *ſchoolmaſter* enough, and I wiſh it had furniſhed out to the world, a few better *ſcholars*, ſuch as would have ſeen long before now, that it was bringing them to Chriſt—By what means? Why by teaching them thoſe *firſt principles* and *fundamentals* of *Chriſtianity*, the unity of Deity, his ſuperiority over the gods of the Heathens, his diſpoſition and ability to reward the obſervers of his will and pleaſure, and to puniſh the lawleſs and diſobedient. Theſe were the leſſons *previouſly* to be *learned* e're mankind could be made capable of receiving the ſalutary truths of the *Goſpel*. Herein conſiſted the *ſhadow* of good things to come—a ſhadow!—"What mean you by a *ſhadow*? Do you not mean by a *ſhadow*, a *type*, a *prefiguration* of the good things of the Goſpel?" No. What then does St. Paul mean by intimating that the *law* is a *ſhadow* of good things to come? Why St. Paul is there ſpeaking of the Law and the Goſpel in a *comparative* point of view, and illuſtrating the preference due to the latter, *as a covenant eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes*, by an apt compariſon of a *ſhadow* to a *ſubſtance*. As the *ſubſtance* of an object exceeds in value that which is only its *ſhadow*, ſo does the Goſpel, the Law. Let us then, my friend, as you direct, "take care that we do not turn the *ſubſtance* into a *ſhadow*.

But I deceive myſelf, you tell me, in not conſidering that a *ſhadow* neceſſarily ſuppoſes a *ſubſtance*, and that what Chriſt did was actually the *ſubſtance* of what the *ſhadow* repreſented.——I fear, my dear Sir, that you deceive yourſelf, in not conſidering that a *ſhadow*, in *your* ſenſe of the word, not only *ſuppoſes*, but *pre*-ſuppoſes a ſubſtance; and that if what Chriſt did by the Goſpel was actually the ſubſtance of the buſineſs ſhadowed in the Law, the *ſha-*

dow

dow muſt have been prior in exiſtence to that without which (viz. the *ſubſtance*) it could not have exiſted at all.

But how a ſhadow can exiſt prior to that which gives it birth, I own myſelf quite at a loſs to underſtand *.

* It will not be altogether digreſſive from the ſubject we are upon, if I endeavour to rectify the prevailing miſconception of the true force of the word αντιτυπος, antitype, as oppoſed to τυπος, a type; and that from the light in which, among others, Dr. Sykes has conſidered it in his Commentary on the Epiſtle to the Hebrews, on the following paſſage in particular—*For Chriſt is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are* αντιτυπα των αληθινων—*the figures of the new, but into Heaven*, &c.

Dr. Sykes's remark upon that paſſage is this—The things, ſays he, which Moſes made (*when he was about to make the tabernacle*) were taken from models or patterns ſhewed him in the mount, and in conſequence the word αντιτυπος ſignifies here a thing copied from a pattern ſhewed; Chriſt, therefore, ſays Dr. Sykes, entered into the true holy place, which Moſes only copied. The patterns ſhewn were properly the τυποι, types; the things *made from* ſuch τυποι, types, are properly αντιτυποι—But this is a definition of the words *type* and *antitype*, which by no means conveys an adequate idea of them. The objects of each are not ſimilar but diſſimilar altogether. And whatever ſenſe τυπος may be underſtood to convey, ἀντιτυπος neceſſarily implies the *reverſe*, which the contraſtive ſignification of the prepoſition αντι, *contrary*, plainly evinces. And in this ſenſe it is evidently uſed by St. Peter, when ſpeaking of Noah's flood—*Wherein*, ſays he, *few*, that is, eight ſouls were ſaved by water—ω και αντιτυπον νυν σωζει βαπτισμα, the *contrary* (not as our tranſlation words it) the *like* figure whereunto baptiſm now ſaves *us*: in other words, water uſed in baptiſm has a quite contrary effect now with *us*. Water once *drowned* all, eight perſons only excepted; now on the contrary it *ſaves* all, ſo that that paſſage in this epiſtle, which is thus rendered—*For Chriſt is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true*, ſhould be rendered, which are the *reverſe* of the true *but unto Heaven*; the former having no more ſimilitude with the latter, than places made with hands on earth can have with the Holy of Holies in Heaven. The *law*, or things pertaining to the *law*, having, as it follows in the ſubſequent chapter, a ſhadow *of good things to come, and not the very* image of the truth or ſubſtance of things ſignified. It has, as St. Auguſtine obſerves, terrene promiſes, a terrene Jeruſalem, a terrene Paleſtine, a terrene kingdom, a terrene ſalvation—Vetus teſtamentum promiſſiones habet terrenas, terrenam Hieruſalem, terrenam Paleſtinam, regnum terrenum, ſalutem terrenam, St. Aug. in Pſal. cxix. which are but meer ſhadows compared with thoſe *ſubſtantial* felicities propoſed by the Goſpel—an *heavenly* Jeruſalem, an *heavenly* paleſtine, an *heavenly* kingdom, an *heavenly* and an eternal ſalvation.

Again.—You like not my definition of the Divine *juſtice*, but aim to reduce it to an abſurdity, telling me that, when I ſay it conſiſts in a noble diſplay of mercy and compaſſion to ſinners, it amounts to a declaration that the divine *juſtice* is divine *mercy*. My idea of each of theſe attributes of Deity is the ſame now as before; and *diſtinct* as may be the *office*, or rather *exerciſe*, of each, yet both muſt *terminate* in *mercy* and loving-kindneſs.

With regard to my queſtion, how to reconcile God's inflicting the puniſhment due to the guilty on the *innocent* Jeſus, you reply, *Volenti* non fit *injuria*, which being at leaſt counterbalanced by---*Father, if it be poſſible let this cup paſs from me*, that part of the controverſy remains juſt as it begun; unleſs it be conſidered, which I think it ought, that a *voluntary* ſubmiſſion to the will of a *ſuperior*, adds *merit* indeed to the obedience of the perſon *ſuffering*, but alters not, or however extenuates not, the *ſeverity* of *will* from whence the ſuffering proceeds.

Again.---I aſked you how the mercy of God was diſplayed, if *juſtice* received its due ſatisfaction? "Why the mercy of God, ſay you, was ſufficiently diſplayed by his prevailing with *juſtice* to accept of a *vicarious* inſtead of a *perſonal* puniſhment."

When I can conceive the Almighty treating with his attributes, as with ſo many *diſtinct*, *ſeparate*, *intelligent*, and *independent* powers, I ſhall, but not till then, ſee into the force of your reaſoning on this part of our preſent controverſy.

Again.---You aſk me "whether it is not eaſy to ſuppoſe, that the dignity of the divine nature added dignity to the human nature, and that *that* made the ſufferings of Chriſt of ſufficient worth

worth to ſatisfy the juſtice of God for the ſins of millions upon millions?"

This is a queſtion to which I had, I thought, given a ſufficient anſwer in my laſt letter. I will however beg leave to add to it this remark, viz. that we ought to take care that we do not, by exalting too much the *dignity* of Chriſt's *human* nature, leſſen the merit of his *conduct* and *behaviour* in it. For if you endow him with moral abilities of a tranſcendency of greatneſs to which man is not to be ſuppoſed capable of arriving, you diſqualify him from becoming a proper pattern for man's imitation, though that was manifeſtly one principal end of his appearance on earth; and it will not appear ſo *extraordinary* that *he* excelled *us* in virtue and goodneſs, who, by virtue of his ſuperior endowments, was not *capable* of doing *leſs*.

Again——When I aſk you how a partial can be equal to an univerſal obedience, you tell me I ſurely forget that I had been ſo *imprudent* as not to ſuppoſe *that* one obedience to be the obedience of God. What a degree of *imprudence* there may be in diſavowing ſuch a ſuppoſition, let the rational and impartial determine. The maker of Heaven and earth ſuffering as a malefactor! An idea how prepoſterouſly blaſphemous*!

But to conclude.——Your warning me againſt ſplitting upon a rock, on which you ſuppoſe me already to have been wrecked, de-

* Certainly, ſays a moſt learned, ingenious, and pious writer, he that is *life itſelf* cannot be ſaid to die or become obedient to the death of the croſs. Nor is it proper or uſual in ſcripture to propound the Deity to us as an example of *humility*, though nothing is ſo frequent there, or even more congruous, than to exhort us to be conformable to him in love, goodneſs, and purity. Vid. the author of a diſcourſe concerning Origen's Opinions.

mands my acknowledgments, though the caution happens to come too late for the ſervice intended. And if, after the manner which you call hereſy, I judge of the doctrines of Chriſtianity, the miſtake, if it be one, ſtands clear of any unwarrantable prejudices, and will therefore, I doubt not, be charitably conſidered by my Maker in the great day of accounts. And were I in fact to poſſeſs myſelf with an opinion, which you think I have already imbibed, that our Saviour is one of the order of *created* beings, I glory in the reflection that I can, from even that view of him, deduce abundant motives for inceſſant praiſes and thankſgivings to him, and to my God on his account. I can bleſs the *Almighty* for ſending among us ſo illuſtrious a pattern of *moral* perfection, and adore and the *ſon* for approving himſelf by his conſtancy, patience, and reſignation, ſo ſufficient an inſtrument of God's compaſſionate regard for us, and for endeavouring, by prayer, by precept and example, to bring us unto the way that leads to eternal life; can acknowledge too, with great reverence, thoſe truths which he was ſent to declare, and his great goodneſs in condeſcending to ſeal them with his blood---am enraptured with the idea of that life and immortality which he brought to light by the Goſpel, diſpelling, by degrees, that miſt under which the important truths lay inveloped, till *he*, the *ſun of righteouſneſs* appeared.

But to conſider him in the light which demands and will for ever obtain from me every teſtimony of the moſt devout affection, reverence, and adoration, which the moſt grateful heart can beſtow, let me contemplate him as my Saviour, my Redeemer: let me look up to him as the *reſtorer* of me and my fellow mortals to the favour of my God, and the felicities of Heaven, forfeited by a *prior aſſociation with the apoſtate powers*. Let me view him *as cut off, but not for himſelf, as bruiſed for* our *iniquities, as taſting death for every man, that through his death he might deſtroy him*

that

that had the power of death, that is, the devil, that *he might bring reconciliation for iniquity,* and *bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs.*

On this view of my Saviour Chriſt, I can for ever dwell with increaſing rapture; and ſhall I be called off from the extatic contemplation by a fruitleſs enquiry whether he is or is not equal in dignity to the SUPREME? NO. Be his rank in the ſcale of beings adequate or inferior to the Moſt *High*, yet he it is on whom I rely for the future welfare of my ſoul: on his merits it is that I expect mercy from my offended God, and a *re-entrance* into the kingdom of Heaven.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours moſt ſincerely.

FINIS.

DEISM

NOT CONSISTENT WITH THE

RELIGION

OF

REASON AND NATURE.

DEISM

REVELATION

DEISM

NOT CONSISTENT WITH THE

RELIGION

OF

REASON AND NATURE.

DEAR SIR,

WHEN I had laſt the pleaſure of a converſation with you at your houſe, you was pleaſed, in your wonted zeal for the cauſe of deiſm, to put into my hands a pamphlet, intitled, *Deiſm fairly ſtated, and fully vindicated*, which, agreeably to your requeſt, I have peruſed with great attention, making remarks as I went along, which I now ſend for your peruſal. And this I do the more willingly, as they afford anſwers to the moſt material ob-

jections to the credibility and importance of *revelation*, and the *authenticity* of the ſacred writings.

From the beginning of the performance there occurs nothing worthy our notice, till the author comes to his *definition* of deiſm, which is as follows:

"Deiſm, ſays he, properly ſo called, whatever ill uſage it may have met with, is no other than the religion eſſential to man, the true original *Religion of Reaſon and Nature*; ſuch as was believed and practiſed by *Socrates* and thoſe of old, who were as great ornaments, and did as much honour to human nature, as any Chriſtian ever did."

In the true idea of the *religion of reaſon and nature*, I underſtand to be implied an attention to all *extraordinary* intimations of our duty, as well as to ſuch as ariſe from the *uſual* exertions of our reaſoning faculties. So that it may and muſt comprehend not only the obſervance of ſuch rules as Socrates and other philoſophers taught and practiſed, but a regard likewiſe to precepts delivered by a *divine* inſtructor, furniſhed with the *requiſite credentials*. Wherefore if to deiſm our author unites not a diſtinct belief of revelation, he ſhould conſider himſelf as poſſibly falling ſhort of the religion of *reaſon and nature*; which teaches, or I know not what is meant by the religion of reaſon and nature, that every precept or point of knowledge, mediately or immediately delivered to us by God, demands from us a diſtinguiſhed reverence and regard—as a ſeparate ſuperadded obligation on our conſciences. And of conſequence it is incumbent on him, before he pretends to aſſimilate the cauſe of deiſm to the religion of reaſon and nature, to prove that in the former is included all that the latter recommends. Now, this I conceive to be a criterion of the propriety of the above com-

pariſon

pariſon which deiſts are ſcarce apprized of.—And yet till they make both agree apparently in rejecting revelation, they cannot pretend to ſay that deiſm, and the religion of reaſon and nature, are abſolutely one and the ſame uniform ſimilar rule of moral agency. That we may therefore put the point here in diſpute upon a proper foot of inquiry, and ſee how far deiſm, in its antichriſtian ſcheme of independency, can be juſtified on the principles of *natural reaſon and religion*; I will ſuppoſe you urging, as a rational foundation for our Deiſt's infidel perſuaſions, the three following, perhaps, only material arguments to be produced in their behalf.

Firſt, It is not probable that any light, information or inſtruction touching the Deity, or our duty to him, (which our Deiſt ſays is, properly ſpeaking, a revelation, p. 17.) ſhould have been communicated to men by an immediate, particular, ſpecial interpoſition of the Deity for that purpoſe; nor

Secondly, Does it appear, that Jeſus Chriſt was really the inſtrument employed by the Deity to convey any ſuch revelation to the world, ſuppoſing it not improbable that God may have been inclined at times to afford us one; nor

Laſtly, Does the authority of thoſe ſcriptures, which are ſaid to be a moſt faithful repoſitory of that ſame revelation, come to us ſo clear and unqueſtionable in that point as might be expected; or the writings themſelves ſeem ſo well calculated, as they ought to be, to anſwer thoſe purpoſes for which they are preſumed to be intended.

If theſe moſt formidable obſtructions to a general reception of Chriſtianity, theſe ſtanding ſtumbling blocks in the way of deiſts ſhould haply at length be removed, though but even to *your* ſatiſ-

faction and conviction, I shall rest myself contented with expecting, what will amply recompence my trouble, if there be any in this address, the pleasure of having luckily prevailed over the too hasty prejudices of a valued friend, and recovered one, at least, from the infatuated and unthinking *many*, and restored him to a rational and manly faith.—In order to which, I shall not *multiply* reasonings on each particular head of enquiry; but satisfy myself chiefly in the use of one argument alone, when that one alone seems conclusive. "First "then, it is not probable, says the Deist, that any light, informa- "tion or instruction touching the Deity, or our duty to him, "*&c.* should have been communicated to men by an immediate, "particular, and special interposition of the Deity for that pur- "pose."—And wherefore? Why my reason, say you, informs me, that the connatural notices in my breast are so sufficiently declarative of the Deity, and of my duty to him, to myself and to all mankind, as to render any further instructions in my way to future happiness useless and unnecessary, which therefore could not have been intended me by my Creator.

Your reason! alas, another man's reason, as he terms it, informs him that there is no God. And if the religion of reason and nature consists only in consulting what every man calls his own reason, atheism might as easily be resolved into the religion of nature by those who at any time espoused that particular persuasion, as you be justified in rejecting revelation, because your reason informs you that it is absolutely superfluous and unnecessary.

But hold, say you, by my reason I do not mean the suggestions of whim, prejudice, and partiality---nor a perverse and reprobate mind; but (what points out the Deity, and my duty to him and to all mankind, and is therefore the *religion of reason and nature*) an unbiassed attention to the nature and fitness of things, a law in which

which is comprehended the whole extent of my duty conſidered in every relation and circumſtance of life; a law obligatory upon every individual, and claimant of my attention therefore in preference to, and even independent of all other *ſupernatural* guides to my conduct.

Aye, that, my friend, is indeed a true portrait of the religion of *reaſon and nature*; and what pity it is that the world does not furniſh out a few more deiſts on that plan? There would then be a proportionally leſs occaſion for revelation. But what ſhall we ſay when nature, whilſt ſhe affords us ſo ample a ſyſtem of moral and religious duties, abounds at the ſame time with too many ſpecious allurements to recede from and tranſgreſs it? What if men, if even deiſts, from the neceſſity of their conſtitution (as *degenerate* free agents I mean) are more liable to exceed than to keep within the bounds of their duty? Did not ſenſuality and voluptuouſneſs, did not envy, pride and ambition, too frequently uſurp the province of right reaſon, the religion of nature would not ſtand ſo much in need perhaps of the propoſed aſſiſtances of revelation; but 'tis to remove thoſe obſtructions to a proper exerciſe of the former, that the latter comes in aid.

If therefore you would have me acquieſce in your opinion, that revelation is ſuperfluous and unneceſſary, you muſt firſt prove it to be ſo by a diſintereſted enquiry into the real truth of the caſe; and by a ſtrict, *conſiſtent* attention to your own golden rule, the religion of reaſon and nature. The meer ſuggeſtions of your own fancy are to be of no moment at all in the affair, nor the prepoſſeſſions you may have imbibed from another man's haſty and authorative declaration. Theſe added to the biaſs of your own wiſhes and inclinations, may eaſily enough perſuade you into a belief that revelation is indefenſible. But alas! how eaſy a matter is it for a man to believe that to be falſe, which he has either an inclination

to

to ſuppoſe, or too much reaſon to wiſh, not to be true! If the religion of reaſon and nature therefore is the directory of your *faith* and practice in life, try whether from that there be ſufficient authority to reject the Chriſtian diſpenſation; ſee whether from the light of the one you can diſcover any thing really unnatural in the inſtitution of the other---Whether, in the firſt place, it is in fact *not* agreeable to *reaſon* to ſuppoſe that nature (fallible as ſhe appears to be) ſhould receive from time to time ſuch admonitions and inſtructions from the Deity, as may be a probable means to forward her in the diſcharge of her various duty? And then, ſecondly, whether revelation having ſo apparently probability in its favour, can *reaſonably* be treated with deriſion, inſolence and contempt? If the principles on which your deiſm is ſupported will countenance ſuch a procedure as this, they are but a ſandy foundation for your confidence, carry a manifeſt repugnancy to the very eſſence of *natural* religion, and diſſent from it in a point of even infinite concern.

True, ſay you, but what then? I am not (as I ſaid before) one of thoſe random contemners of revelation here ſuppoſed; I have reaſons for my infidelity, well examined into and conſidered; and (a point which muſt neceſſarily be ſettled, e'er I can propoſe yielding up to you all, or even any of my doubts and ſcruples) have the circumſtance of *improbability* to oppoſe to the *preſumptive evidences* of Chriſtianity; the former of which greatly preponderates to the diſadvantage of the *latter*.

For in the firſt place is not the law of nature, when attended to as it ought, (and with whom lies the fault if it is not) a full, ſufficient guide to our conduct? Are we not prompted by the dictates of right reaſon, to act in a manner anſwerable to the end of our creation, and the dignity of our nature? How prepoſterous is it then

then, as ſays a late eminent writer *, "for a man to hunt after a guide to his conduct, when the author of his being has planted one in his own breaſt?"

Under the ſuppoſed influence of ſuch an all-ſufficient guide to his judgment, how comes it that that writer ſhould with ſo little judgment oppoſe his own private opinion to the ſentiments of men unqueſtionably his equals at leaſt, if not his ſuperiors, in every advantage that learning, application, and even natural abilities, could give them? How happened it that he was not inſtructed from *within*, to treat with more ſuitable reſpect a religion embraced and reverenced by thoſe, who were not more remarkable for their piety than their parts and penetration? And if the ſcriptures do really abound with ſuch inconſiſtencies and abſurdities, which he from but a bare ſuperficial knowledge of them, is pleaſed to lay to their charge, how comes it that they ſhould eſcape the cenſure of a *Locke*, an *Addiſon*, a *Newton?* There is no reaſon to be given why *they* ſhould be *more* partial to any fancied failings of holy writ, than Mr. *Chubb*; but many, why the judgment they have given in its favour, ſhould be taken in preference to the calumnies and aſperſions with which he has thought fit to load it. Unleſs, as Dr. *Rogers* obſerves, learning, ſtudy, and all thoſe advantages which are uſually thought to render one man's judgment preferable to another's, are to be eſteemed, in the enquiry after truth, of no moment or conſideration whatſoever.

He ought to have conſidered, that if ſome have, with more ſtubborn preſumption perhaps than ſelf-perſuaſion, pronounced Chriſtianity to be falſe, none have yet been able to make it appear ſo to the conviction of ſincere, impartial, and learned enquirers: and

* Vid. Chubb's Farewell.

that

that it would have been worth the employment of his great reaſoning abilities, to account for the conduct of the Supreme Being, in ſuffering a deceit of that kind (if it be one) to paſs upon mankind through ſo many ages paſt, for ſeemingly no other end and purpoſe, than to be the parent of ſome of the moſt cruel miſeries to its firſt champions and defenders, and the fountain whence flowed an ocean of innocent blood. For I think it ought to be particularly remarked, that if at any time falſe religions have been obtruded on mankind by the irreſiſtible *authority* of the ſword, none but ours has been eſtabliſhed on the more trying principle, a readineſs *to periſh with the ſword*---none but ours has gained proſelytes to its cauſe, under ſuch ſtrong prophetic intimations of what unparallelled miſeries they were to encounter, who engaged in its defence. And if you can conceive it poſſible, that men acting under the moſt pure and fervent piety towards God, ſhould be by him given up to ſuch a complicated ſeverity of fate, in conſequence of opinions really falſe and groundleſs, you muſt acknowledge, that they were of all men, as unaccountably as undeſervedly, the moſt miſerable.

But to return.---That there is interwoven in our nature a directory to our conduct, which, would we attend to it, would ſecure us from ever erring in our practice; a rule to our judgment, to which if we would but appeal, we ſhould be as ſeldom erroneous in our principles, I can readily enough admit. By the term conſcience, we uſually diſtinguiſh the one; right reaſon, we call the other. Two different names, in fact, for one and the ſame thing. It is the fitneſs of things which comprehends both. But is this ſame law of nature ſufficient, in fact, to keep men within the bounds of their complicated duty? Do men invariably act up to the rules which right reaſon preſcribes? That this is not the caſe, both daily experience, and the ſtanding laws of ſociety, too abundantly evince.

And

And if, in an anſwer to that, it be ſaid, that neither is revelation, with all its coercive authority, or moſt perſuaſive allurements, ſufficient for theſe ends—what will follow? Why, that men are men, ſubject to the controul of paſſions to which they even court an obedience, and will gratify, when it is their inclination ſo to do, in oppoſition to the perſuaſions of both reaſon and revelation.

The only queſtion meriting, my dear Sir, your obſervation and attention, is, which of the two is moſt likely to anſwer *now*, as a guide, the ends and purpoſes of religion? *Reaſon*, ſubject as it is, to the many inherent frailties and imperfections of human nature? or *revelation*, which comes in aid to it, and is propoſed to us for the very purpoſe of removing thoſe imperfections? From the appearance which man's reaſon now makes, we are apt to entertain too high an idea of its native original endowments; not conſidering the advantages it has borrowed, and the education, if I may ſo ſpeak, which it has in various inſtances received from revelation; by means of which it has been furniſhed, from time to time, with inſights into the wondrous views of Divine Providence, not attainable *ſolely* by human penetration. And if you would but carry your thoughts back to thoſe paſt times of wretchedneſs and deſpair, when an horrid gloom of impenetrable darkneſs, ignorance and error, like a thick gathered cloud, overſhadowed the whole earth; you would ſurely ceaſe to doubt the *occaſion* of God's ſending to us, that day-ſpring from on high to viſit us. You would, on the contrary, be induced to acknowledge, with a becoming gratitude, the many ſingular advantages ſo happily derived to us from the event.

For as by his fatal tranſgreſſion, our firſt parent had bereaved himſelf, in a great meaſure, of that inward purity of nature, wherein he was created, and had contracted, in length of time, a general proneneſs to ſin and wickedneſs; it is not to be ſuppoſed, but that he muſt tranſmit to his deſcendents ſome ſhare at leaſt of that

deadly and diffuſive poiſon. And accordingly we find in fact, that the preſent generation of men (his offspring) are all born into the world, with a predominant bias towards evil, are become complexionally averſe to every thing that is good, and diſpoſed to a life of impiety, unrighteouſneſs, and ſenſuality. And from the ſeveral hiſtories of the heathen world we learn, that men, through a kind of gloomy and ſullen deſpair of divine mercy, ariſing from a too conſcious ſenſe of their own unworthineſs, and variouſly contracted guilt, fell at length into a ſettled indifference towards that God, on whoſe deſerved wrath and indignation they could not reflect, but under the moſt terrifying fears, and foreboding apprehenſions; ſo at length, ſucceeding ages loſt ſight of both him and his laws; were ſo far from perceiving, or even wiſhing his regard for them, that they did not even chooſe to retain him in their knowledge, but transferred the worſhip due to the only true God, to an impious adoration of the meaneſt of his creatures; even to birds and four footed beaſts, and creeping things.

And if the wiſer and more underſtanding part of mankind, were not ſo univerſally loſt in ignorance and error; ſo wholly abandoned to a proſtituted worſhip and ſervice; yet were *they* notwithſtanding in a confeſſedly wretched and diſconſolate ſtate. They were ſenſible of their loſt innocency, and of courſe forfeited intereſt with their maker, of which their conſciences too plainly reminded them; and, what muſt conſiderably awaken their fears and apprehenſions, could not frame to themſelves, any probable ſcheme for re-inſtating themſelves in his favour. They could eaſily enough, by the light of nature alone, diſcover the danger they were in of being puniſhed for their bad conduct; but could not, from any concluſions of reaſon, aſſure themſelves, that, become, as was unhappily their caſe, obnoxious to God's juſtice, that he would remit the puniſhment due

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to their crimes, upon either the merit of their repentance, or any *piacular* oblations in their power to offer up to him, "though they gave their firſt born for their tranſgreſſion, the fruit of their body for the ſin of their ſoul."

No, this was the great work reſerved for our *Saviour* to accompliſh.—It was he, and he alone, who was to eaſe them of their fears, and be the happy inſtrument of reconciling them to their offended God.—He it was whom God himſelf, ſent into the world to *ſave ſinners*—to preach to them remiſſion of ſins, in an unlimited degree, (unlimited, I mean, as to the nature of their crimes) upon the limited, but rational terms of the Goſpel—in a word, there was wanting, ſays a very ſenſible and uſeful writer,* "there was wanting a revelation to diſcover, in what manner, and with what kind of external ſervice, God might acceptably be worſhipped;—there was wanting a revelation to diſcover, what expiation he would be pleaſed to accept for ſin, when his honour and authority were affronted;—there was wanted a revelation to give man aſſurance of the great motives of religion—the rewards and puniſhments of a future ſtate; in fine, there was wanting a particular revelation to make the whole doctrine of religion clear and obvious to all capacities; to add weight and authority to the plaineſt precepts; and to furniſh men with extraordinary aſſiſtances, to enable them to overcome the corruptions of their nature;—and without the aſſiſtance of ſuch a revelation, their wiſeſt men were always of this opinion, that the world can never be reformed."

You may even give over, ſays *Socrates*, all hopes of amending men's manners for the future, unleſs God be pleaſed to ſend you ſome other perſon to inſtruct you: for whatever is ſet right, ſays

* *Vide Stackhouſe's* Body of divinity, *p.* 19.

Plato, in the preſent ill ſtate of the world, can only be done by the interpoſition of God.*

This, in ſhort, is the multiplyed buſineſs of revelation; this the great work begun by the *Abrahamic*, continued by the *Moſaic*, and completed by the *Chriſtian* diſpenſation.

Now if ſuch a ſuppoſed circumſtance in the divine œconomy, ſeems to you either impoſſible or incredible; if you think it an abſurdity in nature, to ſuppoſe that God ſhould *ſend* a perſon into the world purpoſely to make diſcoveries, merely and ſolely for the conſolation and future happineſs of mankind; that the perſon thus ſent, ſhould be enabled to work miracles in *teſtimony* of his miſſion, and at laſt ſuffer death to *accompliſh* the benign purpoſe. If you ſay all this is really incredible and abſurd, you muſt diſpute the merit of even *any* perſon's claim to an au hority, the declared end or deſign of which is, in nature, ſo extraordinary, and, as you think, ſo unwarranted.

But if reaſon will not, cannot, authorize a diffidence ſo derogatory to thoſe moſt unqueſtionable attributes of the Divine Nature, his love, his tenderneſs, and compaſſion towards his creatures, in the one caſe here ſuppoſed, I know not how you can juſtify an inſinuation ſo unfavourable to the dignity and divine authority aſſumed by Jeſus Chriſt, intimated and implied in the other.

That there was actually born into the world, ſuch a perſon as Jeſus Chriſt, we have at leaſt the ſame rational evidence for believing, as that there ever exiſted an *Alexander*, or *Julius Cæſar*. That that ſame *Jeſus* did alſo work frequent miracles, not even his enemies could deny; though they were pleaſed, ſometimes to aſcribe them to

* *Vide Plato* in Apol. Socrat.

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the agency of *Beelzebub*, the prince of devils. That he was *therefore*, fully authorized to demand our attention to thoſe ſeveral doctrines exhibited to us in his Goſpel, as truths delivered by the will and approbation of God, (a point now *ſecondly* to be conſidered) we are ſufficiently encouraged to believe from the following plain and obvious concluſion of right reaſon; the only argument on this point to which I ſhall give any attention at preſent.

It is a truth, I think inconteſtible, that our Saviour could not work miracles, in ſupport of doctrines ſo unqueſtionably good and uſeful, as are thoſe which characterize the precepts of the Goſpel, but by the concurrent agency of a good ſpirit neceſſarily reſiding in him, or immediately derived to him, from the fountain of all goodneſs. In either caſe, it is quite conſiſtent with the dictates of right reaſon, to attend to the miracles, on account of the doctrines; and to pay a regard to the doctrines, in deference to the miracles.

I am not inſenſible with what contempt this maxim is treated by many, who term it arguing in a circle; yet am I not, therefore, the leſs ſatisfied of its force, uſefulneſs, and propriety. For if, at any time, men's attention to a train of truths, not ſo naturally obvious and intelligible, perhaps, as neceſſary and important, could be beſt and moſt effectually engaged by an awful diſplay of ſome unuſual, ſome miraculous teſtimonies of theſe truths: it is far from being incredible, that ſuch expedients ſhould occaſionally have been employed to ſo noble, generous, and uſeful an end. But will it as naturally follow, that God ſhould at any time direct, or even permit the uſe of ſuch extraordinary means of working upon men's ſenſes and paſſions, barely to miſlead them into error? That invariable principle of univerſal love and benevolence, which gave birth to, and is, as it were, the very ſoul of creation itſelf, will ever reſtrain its Divine Author from reverſing, or ſuffering others

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to reverſe the *natural* to the deſtruction of the *moral* government of the world. Nor can any of thoſe ſtated laws of nature, by which is regulated, with ſuch conſummate wiſdom, each diſtinct ſyſtem in the grand *univerſal whole*, ever be interrupted, but by virtue of a power adequate to, or in part and on purpoſe communicated from that which at firſt eſtabliſhed them. So that miracles muſt ever come with a greater or leſs degree of credibility, in proportion to the appeal made to them, in proof of a greater or leſs utility.

Nor will the confident report of other miracles, which ſeems to be urged only in ſupport of doctrines in themſelves falſe or frivolous, diſcredit in the leaſt the teſtimony of thoſe wrought by our Saviour, in evidence of what is true and important—with men, I mean, who are willing to diſtinguiſh truth from falſehood; what is, from what is not—with men, in ſhort, who can proportion, properly, their aſſent to the ſeveral different degrees of credibility with which atteſted facts come attended. For two or more recorded miracles may come ſupported by the ſame external circumſtances of credibility, and yet they may not be therefore all equally, all internally alike credible. A fit occaſion for every ſuppoſed miraculous interpoſition of Divine Power, ſhould be firſt proved, e'er we give a willing aſſent to even the moſt plauſible evidence brought in favour of it;

> *Nec Deus interſit niſi dignus vindice nodus*
> *Inciderit.* HOR.

This conſideration, added to the known completion of prophecies, which adds a degree of probability to the recorded miracles of our Saviour and his apoſtles, with which none others come attended, is what gives that par-

partial but honeſt bias to our faith in *them*, preferably and in contradiction to all others of a more modern date.

Point me out ſome doctrine fairly deducible from thoſe miracles aſcribed to Abbé *Paris*; a doctrine evidently claimant of ſo extraordinary a token of the divine ſanction and approbation; a doctrine of real conſequence to the preſent and future happineſs of mankind; and which they could not have arrived to the knowledge of, but by ſome actual *immediate* intelligence from the Deity; and I ſhould be cautious how I diſputed the veracity of the reports given of them. But when, on the other hand, the reverſe is more evidently the real caſe, it concerns me not to make them at all a ſubject of my enquiry. If they would influence men to views and practices diſcountenanced and condemned by laws natural or revealed, I, in that caſe, may reaſonably conclude, that there is ſome impenetrable and latent juggle in the affair; and in fact, that they are no miracles at all; but ſuch lying wonders, only, as have been frequently *foretold*, and might poſſibly be effected by the cunning craftineſs of men intereſted in caſting a miſt before the eyes of thoſe who loved darkneſs rather than light; and whoſe ſubtlety might be ſufficient to deceive even the *elect*.

Not to dwell, therefore, unneceſſarily long on a point of enquiry, in itſelf of ſo little moment, on *imaginary* diſadvantages to the cauſe of Chriſtianity; I ſhall, without even mentioning thoſe ſeveral previous diſpenſations of God's providence, introductory to the miſſion of *Jeſus* in the fullneſs of time; the wonderful preparation with which it was introduced, *viz.* by a long train of preliminary incidents; direct promiſes to the ancient patriarchs; a variety of prophetic intimations, both before and under the legal œconomy; and laſtly, an expreſs declaration,

ration, that He (by name) ſhould come ſo peculiarly, and ſupereminently circumſtanced in, or endowed with, the power of working miracles (whom men were to hear in all things;) I ſay, waving theſe corroborating evidences of a divine ſanction, which might be urged in further evidence of our Saviour's title to the ſacred character he aſſumed; it may be ſufficient, I preſume, to conclude, from his power of working miracles, in ſupport of doctrines ſo evidently good and uſeful as were thoſe recorded in his Goſpel, that Jeſus Chriſt was really the inſtrument employed by the Deity, to convey to mankind a revelation of his will.

Well, allowing, for argument ſake, the *probability* of God's having revealed himſelf (by means of the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt) for the information, comfort, and future happineſs of mankind, yet, ſhew me, ſay you, in the *third* place, the genuineneſs of thoſe writings, which are ſaid to be ſuch a faithful repoſitory of that ſame revelation, and their expediency to anſwer thoſe very purpoſes for which they are preſumed to be intended.

How, in the firſt place, does it appear, that the Scriptures are really the writings of thoſe very perſons, under whoſe names they are publiſhed; or, that the ſeveral circumſtances therein related, have, as hiſtorical narrations, a proper evidence to ſupport them?

Why, all this I believe, upon thoſe grounds of credibility, which challenge my belief of the authenticity and genuineneſs of any other book or hiſtory you ſhall name me.—But are writings, in which are ſaid to be concerned the ſalvation of mankind, to be put upon the ſame footing with books which contain in them little more, perhaps, than mere matters of amuſement? Is it of the ſame conſequence, whether thoſe hiſtories, in which are recorded the exploits of a *Cæſar* and an *Alexander*, are true and genuine relations, as the hiſtory

hiſtory of our Saviour and his apoſtles? No, that be far from me to inſinuate. But then, unleſs you think it reaſonable to diſregard all faith in hiſtory, as a point of credulity in itſelf abſurd and unwarrantable, and will inſiſt upon it, that nothing in fact is to be believed, but what we ourſelves ſee done before our eyes; I would aſk you, how things tranſacted at a conſiderable diſtance of time paſt, whether of ſacred ſtory or prophane, can be tranſmitted to poſterity, but through the ſame kind of channel? And what other methods need be uſed, to engage our confidence in the one, than is neceſſary to eſtabliſh the credit and authority of the other? And by what *arguments* would you endeavour to convince me, that *Livy* and *Herodotus* were in reality the authors of thoſe hiſtories which go, with ſuch unqueſtioned pretenſions, under their names, and that the accounts given by each, have, as hiſtorical narrations, a proper evidence to ſupport them, which will not lie with equal weight, in either of thoſe particulars, in favour of the hiſtories of both the Old and New Teſtament.

Well, ſuppoſing that to be a conſideration, as much in proof, as you would wiſh, of the *authenticity* of the Scriptures in general, yet wherein, ſay you, conſiſts their *importance* in point of *information* and *inſtruction*? For how ſhall I know where, among ſuch a variety of readings in the ſame book, to fix upon that which is the true one?—Why, the ſame rules of criticiſm which you would make uſe of, to diſcover the true reading of any one author among the claſſics at large, muſt be employed in your peruſal and examination of theſe. In either caſe, your reaſon (as far as you have qualified it for paſſing judgment, by thoſe uſeful helps and aſſiſtances, which enable a man to become a critic in any other learned compoſition whatſoever) muſt be your guide. If at any time in the courſe of your enquiries doubts and difficulties ſhould ariſe, which you yourſelf cannot maſter, you muſt, in order to

their being ſet in a true and proper light, have recourſe to, and depend on, in proportion to their ſuperior ſkill and acquirements, the judgment and opinion of others. And unleſs you would conclude, becauſe various have been the readings of *Homer*, of *Virgil*, and of *Horace*, that therefore neither of them are to be regarded as genuine and eſtabliſhed writers, or as authors deſerving our peruſal and regard; I will deſire you to put it home to your breaſt, and ingenuouſly tell me, whether you think there is, in reality, any foundation for impeaching the ſacred writings of non-authenticity and unfaithfulneſs, of inſufficiency as a rule of faith, or of unwarranted pretenſions, as a repoſitory of revealed truths, becauſe they have accidentally given occaſion to a variety of diſſonant readings and interpretations?

But who, ſay you, in the difficult caſes ſuppoſed above, are the judges by which I am at laſt to be determined, when among thoſe very perſons, who claim an *authority* to preach and expound ſcripture doctrines, ſo few, even of theſe, agree in giving the ſame unvaried meaning to the ſame paſſages and expreſſions in thoſe admired pages?

A queſtion is here ſuppoſed, which may be beſt anſwered by the following important piece of advice; which is this;

After having thoroughly examined into the grounds and evidences of *Chriſtianity*, make the due diſtinction between *that* and the pretended truths charged upon it. Make yourſelf maſter of every argument which points out the divine authority of our Saviour; and when that is done, attend cloſely to the ſeveral doctrines he advances as an *appointed* revealer of the will of Heaven. What he ſays you will, of courſe, in deference to that *authority* with which he *ſpeaks*, receive and believe. What *others* ſay for him, or aſſert of him, by virtue of *their* commiſſion and inſpired powers, that claims,

claims, in proportion, the ſame regard. So that thoſe doctrines which our Saviour delivered concerning the Father, himſelf, and all mankind, or the apoſtles, in his name, are by all means to be embraced without reſerve. Thus far ſhalt thou go, and no farther; I mean, for faith neceſſarily *undefiled*. For practice you may go farther; from the Scriptures you may repair to thoſe venerable lights, the fathers, for edification, for diſcipline, for patterns of ſanctity and moral purity. There you have before you an unbounded field of inſtruction.

But if, through an exceſs of pious zeal, *they* would, at any time, carry you into matters of faith (or practice) not warranted either by reaſon or revelation, there, if you are wiſe, you would take your leave of them: for though we are not to conſider them in that ridiculous light, in which a late eminent writer has penciled them out to the world, yet neither are we to view them through the medium of *infallibility*. They claim from us much for their tranſmitted records of primitive ſtory; much for their exemplary piety and devotion, much for their unſhaken conſtancy and Chriſtian fortitude. Let us, however, not be afraid to acknowledge, that they *caſually* ſhared weakneſſes and imperfections in common with the reſt of mankind. And when theſe are made the ſubject of ridiculous banter by ſome, let us not be under ſuch an alarm and uneaſineſs, as if, with theirs, the reputation of *Chriſtianity* is proportionally endangered. The reaſonings of thoſe reverend ſages are at beſt but the reaſonings of *men*. All doctrines therefore deduced by them from Scripture, which are not apparently *profitable* for *edification* as well as *inſtruction*, may reaſonably be conſidered as coming with ſo *queſtionable* a claim to our attention, that neither, if we believe them, are we the better, neither, if we believe them not, are we the worſe.

But will you, becauſe diſputes may have run high on ſome falſe topics of enquiry, weakly or wickedly termed *Chriſtian*, conclude, that therefore all the real pretenſions of revelation are, in the groſs, to be diſregarded and neglected? Your boaſted religion of nature, in which there is ſcarce any one principle which has not been made the ſubject of diſpute, may, by a parity of reaſon, be rejected at the ſame time. "Has not the exiſtence of a God, the liberty of man, the nature of good and evil; what is happineſs; what is it that thinks within us; whether the ſoul be material or immaterial, mortal or immortal; the nature of juſtice and moral honeſty; in ſhort, every point of morality or natural religion, been controverted? Is the inference from thence that there is or can be no ſuch thing as natural religion? Is there no ſuch thing as truth, becauſe the queſtion has been, what is truth? Is there no ſuch thing as right reaſon, becauſe men have maintained infinite abſurdities and contradictions about every thing in even matters of moral obligation?" *

But would not Providence, ſay the Deiſts, have prevented the Scriptures from becoming ſuch a ſource of various ſentiments and opinions, if he had intended them for that general and important benefit you imagine? Would he not have left us ſuch an unerring criterion, by which to judge of their true meaning, as he that runneth might read, or that all who have the ſame opportunities and qualifications for conſulting them, muſt neceſſarily unite in giving the ſame meaning to the ſame paſſages and expreſſions.

If this is reaſonably to be expected from *revelation*, as a guide, I would aſk, why it happens, that, under the ſuppoſed *infallible* direction of right reaſon, any two in life are capable of differing in point of judgment and opinion, in even matters of moral obliga-

* Vid. Dr. Benſon on the Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity.

tion?

tion? A ſuppoſed infallibility in the *writers* of revealed truths, does not neceſſarily preclude the natural fallibility of their ſeveral *readers*. The unerring criterion, in ſhort, by which to judge of the truth of revelation in general, and the doctrines ſeverally deducible from it, is abſolutely and ſolely right reaſon. But whilſt different men of different views, prejudices, and prepoſſeſſions, ſubſtitute *opinion* in its ſtead, it is no wonder, if many others are betrayed into a complaint, that no fixed rule at all is given us for that purpoſe.

I hope, by this time, that my friend accedes to the force of *reaſon*, and is convinced, that a deiſt, in order to his thinking and acting agreeably to the religion of reaſon and nature, in other words, e're a deiſt and a *moral* man can be ſaid to be, in principles, one and the ſame, *i. e.* in *equal* eſtimation in the eye of Deity, it is neceſſary that the former, in a country, I mean, where Chriſtianity is eſtabliſhed, ſhould be a friend to, and eſpouſe with ſincerity, the religion of Jeſus Chriſt; for *that* coming to us as a promulgation of divine truths and inſtructions, lays evidently as great a claim to our notice and eſteem, as any other moral obligations whatſoever. Nor is it an argument of any weight, which ſome urge againſt the probability of revelation, that the moral duties it means to enforce, are none elſe than what natural religion acquieſces in and recommends: this ſhould ſerve rather to ſtrengthen than weaken its authority; ſince to the natural obligations which Chriſtianity recommends to our regard, it ſuperadds as well proper motives as proper means, to engage us in the practice of them; to name no more at preſent with regard to the latter, than the duties of *examination*, *mortification*, and *ſelf-denial*, which are indiſputably ſuch points of diſcipline, as all, who impartially conſider them, will acknowledge to be eſtabliſhed upon views truly rational, uſeful and becoming.

So

So far conſidered then it muſt appear very evident, I think, to the impartial, that the deiſt's rejection of revelation has no foundation in the *religion of reaſon and nature*; nor does it advantage the cauſe of deiſm in the leaſt, "That Socrates, and thoſe of old, were as great ornaments, and did as much honour to human nature, as any Chriſtian ever did."

Had it been ſaid, that *Socrates*, &c. did as much honour, and were as great ornaments to human nature, ſo circumſtanced as it was in *their* days, as *Chriſtians* do and are now, to the improved religion, and other ſuperior advantages *they* pride themſelves in the poſſeſſion of, there had been perhaps too much truth in the remark. But if they mean by the reflection, what ſeems too apparently to be *their* propoſed concluſion from it, that nothing more is required of *us*, in point of moral and religious obligations, than, beſides copying thoſe worthies of old in their practice, to attend with a becoming conſcientious deference to their precepts, they undoubtedly miſlead their followers into a moſt palpable and fatal error. They, in that caſe, either weakly or wickedly deceive them. They muſt either not know what are the deſigned ends and purpoſes of revelation, and then their random aſperſions on it are an argument of a moſt unpardonable wantonneſs of impiety, a prejudging irreverence of behaviour towards its divine author; or they muſt knowingly and wilfully miſrepreſent them, and then I would aſk how ſuch a conduct quadrates with the dictates of the *religion of reaſon and nature*.

They cannot be under any the leaſt degree of doubt, but that the deſign of Chriſtianity is to make ſuch diſcoveries as ſhould, and, if duly attended to, would lead to actions more ſuitably good and rational, than were before in *general* practice; to inforce the obligation of moral duties, by ſtronger and more perſuaſive motives than

than the religion of nature *depraved*, than even the religion and improved ſentiments of *Socrates* could, with any proper authority, eſtabliſh; and to complete men for attainments for which they were created.

The religion of old (totally devoid of thoſe ſtrong enforcements to the practice of the law of nature, with which Chriſtianity abounds) furniſhed out ſuch intimations concerning the nature of things as were either very doubtful, dark, and obſcure, or elſe conſpicuouſly weak, whimſical, and abſurd—Witneſs their many extravagant conceptions of the nature of God, and the internal nature and principle of man; their confuſed ideas of the origin, formation, and government of the world, and their ſtill more inconſiſtent views and practices in the nature of their religious worſhip, the performance of which was diſtinguiſhed either by acts of idolatrous impiety, or pious inhumanity; by either worſhipping *ſtocks or ſtones*, or *offering up their ſons and their daughters unto devils*.

The intended redemption of mankind, from the guilt and miſery they were too conſcious of having contracted; the doctrine of a reſurrection from the dead, of a judgment to come, and of rewards and puniſhments in an after-ſtate, are verities, which, allowing that men ever arrived to any tolerable degree of knowledge concerning them, vaniſhed from the world a long time before the coming of our Saviour—Nor does it appear, that life and immortality were ever clearly brought to light, but by the Goſpel: No, not to the all-penetrating eye of *Socrates*, or even the divine *Plato* himſelf. The *nature* and *terms*, however, of the *redemption*, the *perſon* by whom it was to be effected, and by whom the world is at laſt to be judged, were circumſtances of information, in their nature, not capable of being derived to men, but through the channel of revelation.

But if *Socrates* was confirmed in the belief of ſome of theſe truths, yet could he make them equally apparent to others? Could he publiſh them to the world with that degree of confidence and authority, as did our *Saviour*; who, by a ſeries of miracles, prophecies, and an unſpotted conduct, gave ſufficient evidence to the *impartial*, of a derived commiſſion from *Heaven*, to declare, confirm, and eſtabliſh them?

But if, after all, you could prove to me, that moral obligations, to which *Socrates* is preſumed ſo remarkably to have attended, and ſo illuſtriouſly diſcharged, work ſo univerſally ſtrong and powerfully on men's conſciences, as that they naturally perform what they ſee or know to be their duty, I would grant you, that then nothing more would ſeem needful, as a law to our conduct, than the awakening voice of nature and right reaſon. But ſince daily experience evinces, that men want more to be excited to the practice of their duty, than to be informed wherein it conſiſts, it is evident, that revelation, if only on account of its many peculiar motives to virtue, is *therefore* highly eligible, and worthy of acceptation. For what can we conceive more neceſſary and important, more conducive to the ſafety and well-being of ſociety, than to ſolicit men's attention to its own public laws in general, as well as to thoſe of a more private, though not leſs diffuſive nature in particular, the important duties of piety, temperance, chaſtity, and charity, on the principles of *Chriſtian* obedience? Of what general advantage, I ſay, muſt it be, to have thoſe duties *enforced* on the conſciences of men, by the added hopes and terrors of a day to come, when *God will bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

But to proceed.—Our Deiſt, in page the ſixth, gives us a notable ſpecimen of his dexterity in forging, on occaſion, the ſtamp of

of *authority* on the deiſts principles, in order to make them paſs with a more ſpecious ſplendid currency through the world; and the inſtance I am going to give of it, ſerves, at the ſame time to ſhew, with what aſſiduity and eagerneſs the deiſts will catch at every the ſmalleſt twig they can meet with in their way, to ſave a ſinking cauſe; the great name he has been pleaſed, in the following caſe, to make free with, being ever before univerſally diſtinguiſhed under principles as diſſimilar to his own, as light is to darkneſs, or orthodoxy to infidelity.

Dr. *Sherlock*, if you will believe our Deiſt, is one of thoſe rational divines who aſſerts, "that deiſm is the alone excellency and true glory of Chriſtianity." (*p.* 6.)—If he had conſulted the biſhop with any other view than by laying hold of ſome detached unconnected paſſages in his ſermon *, to make it ſpeak, if poſſible, with ſome ſeeming approbation of *his* ſcheme of thinking, he would, I am perſuaded, have found, in inſtances without number, that his Lordſhip and he think as differently of revelation, as a believer and an unbeliever can think.

"The religion of the Goſpel, ſays the Biſhop, is the true original religion of reaſon and nature †." And again, "the Goſpel has reference to the law of reaſon and nature:" and what of all that? Is the Biſhop a *deiſt* on the evidence of theſe declarations? If he is not, to what purpoſe is he quoted? And if he is, mark the conſequence to our author.

Dr. *Sherlock* ſays, and our Deiſt himſelf approves the aſſertion, "that the religion of the Goſpel is the true original religion of

* Sermon for propagating the Goſpel in foreign parts.

† Vid. Dr. Leland, p. 42.

reaſon and nature." Aye! what this from a deiſt? Alas! our author, like a confuſed culprit at the *Old Bailey*, cites at once a fancied friend to his character, without conſidering that the man was too honeſt not to ſay what he thought; and that the evidence he muſt give, would but aggravate and add weight to the proſecution.

Here the Biſhop is called in, to vouch for our author's rationality as a deiſt. Well, and how does he prove it? Why, by aſſerting, that that revelation which the deiſt derides, is nothing ſhort of the religion of reaſon and nature, which he pretends to approve. Our author for your man of *ſound judgment and nervous reaſoning!*

Our Deiſt having here then, a little unluckily for himſelf, cited a paſſage from Dr. *Sherlock*, which proves too plainly, that his oppoſition to Chriſtianity is alike repugnant to the principles of *natural reaſon and religion*, is forced at laſt to add, by way of ſupplement to his Lordſhip's own words, conſcious how inexpreſſive they were before to his advantage, or rather, how expreſſive to his confuſion, ſomething, though full as little to his purpoſe, from the product of his own brain.

After telling us that Dr. *Sherlock* ſays, "it is true, that there are ſome inſtitutions in the Goſpel, which, in their own nature, are no *conſtituent parts of religion*," I will venture to add, ſays he, "that the ſame may be ſaid, for ought that appears to the contrary, of ſome *doctrines* of the Goſpel, which doctrines, together with the inſtitutions referred to, may be ſaid to conſtitute pure Chriſtianity, by way of contradiſtinction to pure natural religion." (*p.* 6.) So that according to the very modeſt reaſoning of our Deiſt, what conſtitutes pure Chriſtianity in the groſs, is an abſolute and entire oppoſition in all its parts, in precepts, ceremonies, and doctrines, to the very

very being of natural religion; and that thoſe inſtitutions, and ceremonies, and doctrines, and thoſe only which are no conſtituent parts of natural religion, do collectively make up the ſum total of Chriſtianity. Was this in reality the caſe, was Chriſtianity in fact ſo unreaſonable, I will add, ſo *irreligious* an inſtitution, I would myſelf join our author in condemning and rejecting it; or, with Mr. *Chandler* agree, that it would then be ſcarce worth while to enquire what the religion of Chriſt is. (*p.* 7.)

But what if after all it appears, that thoſe very inſtitutions, ceremonies, and doctrines, which conſtitute pure Chriſtianity, are the inſtitutions, the ceremonies, and the doctrines, which are abſolutely, and to all intents and purpoſes, one and the ſame, proportionally I mean, and as parts to the whole. For you muſt obſerve, that I regard every ſubſervient *inſtrument* of *religion*, as a material part of religion itſelf. That a public worſhip of the Deity is not leſs a part of the *religion of reaſon and nature*, than any poſitive precept of the Goſpel, our Deiſt cannot aim to diſprove, without oppoſing, at the ſame time, the general ſenſe and practice of all ages paſt; there being no people, of any religion whatſoever, but what always expreſſed in a public manner their veneration of the deities they owned, by ſuch external tokens of reverence, as were moſt in uſe among them *.

" *Lactantius*, as an argument of the abſurdity of polytheiſm, ſuppoſes it an univerſal conceſſion among men, that they ſhould pay to each God, whom they acknowledged, divine worſhip: and this not only in honour of his divinity, but in conſideration of his paternity, as *that* one common parent, from whom they received

* Scott's works, vol. II. p. 130. fol. edit.

life, health, and food *." And of ſuch conſequence to the happineſs of a ſtate, ſays *Tully*, is piety towards the Gods, " that take away that, and you undermine the very foundations on which integrity, friendſhip, and that moſt excellent of all virtues, juſtice itſelf, is ſupported †." And if we would endeavour, ſays *Woollaſton*, to behave ourſelves towards God according to truth, we ſhall find ourſelves bound to worſhip him in the beſt manner we can. By worſhipping him, I mean, ſays he, owning him to be what he is, and ourſelves to be what we are, by ſome more ſolemn and proper act; that is, by addreſſing ourſelves to him as his dependents, and as the ſupreme cauſe and governor of the world, with acknowledgments of what we enjoy, petitions for what we really want, or he knows to be convenient for us ‡."

And yet how can a plan of public worſhip, with any decency or propriety, be executed but by ſome ſuch viſible obſervances, ſuch outward religious actions and declarations, as the wiſdom of Chriſtian ſocieties ſhall judge moſt fit and reaſonable in themſelves, moſt expreſſive of that internal faith, love, and obedience, to which they are called by their *religion*; and are moſt likely to kindle in each other's breaſts a lively and laſting ſenſe of piety, devotion, and every virtue—Inſtead therefore of diſregarding theſe neceſſary appendages to public worſhip, as *no conſtituent parts* of religion; as mere niceties and trifles, of no manner of conſideration in the ſight of God, (as do avowedly too many of thoſe who

* Omnem Deum qui ab homine colitur neceſſe eſt inter ſolennes ritus & precationes patrem nuncupari, non tantum honoris gratia verum etiam rationis quod & antiquior eſt homine, & quod vitam ſalutem victum præſtat ut pater. *Lactant. de verâ ſap. & relig. lib. IV. p.* 177.

† Pietate adverſus Deos ſublata fides etiam & ſocietas humani generis, & excellentiſſima virtus juſtitia tollitur. *Cic. de nat. deor.*

‡ *Woollaſton*'s relig. of nat.

denomi-

denominate themſelves Chriſtians) men ſhould conſider, whether they have or have not an apparent view to the known purpoſes of religion; whether outward actions, which are ſo many preſumptive evidences of inward diſpoſitions to piety and virtue in ourſelves, are not likely to promote the ſame worthy affections in others? And whether, in proportion to the importance of the end, we are not to regard the means conducive to that end?

As to thoſe two *ſacramental* duties of our profeſſion, viz. *Baptiſm* and the *Lord's Supper*—Are they not inſtitutions decent, reaſonable, and morally inſtructive? Do they not ſerve to raiſe our devotions, to inflame our gratitude, to infuſe generous ſentiments? A queſtion which thoſe beſt can anſwer, for thoſe only know, who have perſonally *ratified* the one, and been *ſeriouſly* participant of the other. Be pleaſed, however, if it be not a ſubject too grave to engage your attention, to take an opinion of them both, from the learned Dr. *Jenkins*.

" One of the purpoſes, ſays he, for which ſacraments were in-
" ſtituted, was to be the outward and viſible ſign of our entrance
" into covenant with him. For if covenants between man and
" man be made with all the formality of witneſſes of hands, and
" ſeals and delivery, in ſolemn and expreſs words; if men know
" themſelves too well to truſt one another, without this ſolem-
" nity, it may well be expected, that when God is pleaſed to per-
" mit them to enter into covenant with himſelf, he ſhould not re-
" ceive them under leſs obligations of caution and ſecurity for their
" integrity, than men are wont to uſe among one another; ſince
" every breach of covenant with him is infinitely more affronting
" and ſinful, than any breach of covenant with man can be. And
" as their outward ſigns ſerve to raiſe our attentions and fix our
" minds, and ſo put us in remembrance, that heaven and earth, an-

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" gels and men, are witneſſes againſt us, if we prove treacherous " and unfaithful in this covenant; ſo they are as tokens and " pledges to us of God's love and favour, and give us ſenſible " and viſible aſſurances of that grace which is inviſible and ſpi- " ritual. 'Tis not a little in the nature and temper of man, to " be better pleaſed and contented with ſomething preſent in hand, " though of ſmall value, and inſignificant in itſelf, as a token and " pledge of what is made over to him, than with the greateſt pro- " miſes and proteſtations, without any thing as an earneſt to con- " firm them. Now, what is inward and inviſible is abſent as to " ſenſe, and what is future ſtands in need of ſomething preſent " to repreſent it to us; and therefore God, who was pleaſed to " bind himſelf, as it were, by an oath, that he might be want- " ing in nothing which might help our infirmities, and aſſiſt our " faith, has been pleaſed, for our comfort and truſt in him, to " appoint viſible ſigns and pledges of that which is inviſible, and " to give ſuch aſſurance to our very ſenſes, as they are capable " of, that all the promiſes of his ſpiritual bleſſings, ſhall be as " certainly fulfilled to us, as the outward ſigns and pledges are " duly received by us; that the ſoul, even in this caſe, where it is " more immediately concerned, might not be wholly independent " on the body; but ſince both muſt be happy or miſerable toge- " ther in the next world, both might be aſſiſtant in the way and " means of ſalvation in this."

And to ſhew the moral influence which the uſe of theſe ſacra- ments has naturally on our minds, the ſame author obſerves, of baptiſm, that " it is a very ſignificant and apt repreſentation of the " cleanſing and purifying the ſoul from ſin; and that in this, " men of all nations and all religions ſeem to have been agreed. " For nothing was more frequent among the heathens, than their " waſhings and purifyings, and though they attributed a great

" deal

" deal too much to them, yet the ſuperſtitious opinions which " they had of theſe outward cleanſings, could never have ſo uni- " verſally prevailed, if there had not been ſome foundation for " the uſe of them, in the nature of things; and that is the great " fitneſs which is in thoſe outward waſhings, to excite us to pu- " rity of mind, and to repreſent the great duty which lies upon us, " to keep our conſciences undefiled, which only can render us ac- " ceptable to God."

And of the Lord's Supper he obſerves, that " the elements of " bread and wine have a peculiar ſuitableneſs, to bring to our " remembrance the body and blood of Chriſt, offered upon the " croſs for us, to make us partakers of them, to become the " commemorative and repreſentative ſigns of the euchariſt, and to " be pledges of all the benefits which we receive thereby *. It is, " as Dr. *Scott* obſerves, a ſolemn commemoration of Chriſt's " death, and is an expreſſion of kindneſs, ſufficient to captivate " the moſt ungrateful ſouls, and extort obedience from them; it " is a fœderal right, whereby God and we, by feaſting as it were " together, do, according to the antient cuſtom of Jews and Hea- " thens, mutually engage ourſelves one to another, whereby God, " by giving us the myſtical bread and wine, and we by receiving " them, do mutually engage ourſelves to one another, upon thoſe " ſacred pledges of Chriſt's body and blood, that we will faithfully " perform each their part of that everlaſting covenant, which was " purchaſed by Chriſt; and what can be greater reſtraint to us, " when we are ſolicited to any ſin, than the ſenſe of being un- " der ſuch a dreadful vow and obligation? With what face dare " we liſten to any temptation to evil, when we remember how

* Vide *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Religion, *Stackhouſe*'s Body of Divinity.

" lately

" lately we ſolemnly engaged ourſelves to the contrary, and took " the ſacrament upon it?" *

If at any time theſe eſtabliſhed memento's to our conduct fail having the intended influence on our morals; it is, becauſe we ourſelves ſuffer them not to operate with any proper advantage on our minds. The remembrance of that God, to whom we have devoted ourſelves in baptiſm, paſſeth away perhaps from off our minds, as the remembrance of a gueſt that tarrieth but a day; and the *cup of bleſſing* is too frequently taken from our lips, as if we only *drank* to one; that cup, which, inſtead of being a proper teſt of our averſion to thoſe ſins which occaſioned Chriſt's death, is, alas! too often made only an occaſional introduction, to an opportunity of proſecuting them in higher life.

But religion, ſays a diſtinguiſhed advocate for deiſm †, is a matter purely perſonal, and the knowledge of it to be obtained by perſonal conſiderations, independent of any guides, teachers, or ceremonies. An obſervation which, however confidently urged, will, I am perſuaded, then only hold good, when there ceaſe to be ſuch men in the world as he who firſt advaneed it. If human nature was really in ſuch a ſtate of perfection, as that every man left to himſelf, would reaſon juſtly, judge truly, and act agreeably, there would be little occaſion not only for revelation, but for laws, government, or civil authority in the world. But men taken in the groſs, are, and ever will be, weak, ignorant, paſſionate and con-

* Vide *Scott*'s Chriſtian Life, vol. I. p. 115.

† Author of ſcheme of literal prophecy.

ceited;

ceited; and muſt therefore be determined by ſome authority or other *.

With what conſiſtent goodneſs therefore has the Deity interpoſed an authoritative declaration of his will, in a matter of ſuch mighty importance (which *none* can claim a right to diſpute) and given a law to our conduct in the great points of piety and morality, which cut off all *reaſonable* occaſions for doubts or difficulties in either!

The great uſe and intent of all the poſitive duties and ceremonies of our religion, are obvious enough to all thoſe who examine them with fairneſs and impartiality; nor do any of its doctrinal points, when not miſinterpreted and miſapplied, convey any ſenſe and meaning, which right reaſon will not allow to be rational objects of our faith, and, in proportion, *conſtituent* parts of religion. They not only open to us ſuch noble diſcoveries concerning the nature of the Deity, and the origin of the univerſe, as were not to be obtained by the painful reſearches of philoſophers of the moſt penetrating genius, but propoſe to us, at the ſame time, a ſcheme of morality, which ſurpaſſes all that comes recommended either by *Lycurgus*, *Numa*, *Plato*, *Ariſtotle*, &c. †. What then will follow? Why, that all thoſe inſtitu-

* Rogers's preface in vindicat. of the Chriſt. Rel.

† Would men but examine into the reaſonableneſs of the doctrines, and moral precepts of the Goſpel, with coolneſs and impartiality, not by the treacherous bent of their depraved wills and affections, but by the unerring teſt of ſober reaſon and reflection, they would at once acknowledge, that to *love God with all our heart, with all our ſoul, and with all our ſtrength*, is but a juſt debt of gratitude to our Maker, for thoſe numberleſs bleſſings, we are every moment receiving from his all-bountiful hand. And as the God and author of nature is *holy*, that it ſhould be our ſtudy to be *holy in all manner of converſation*; that if we would paſs through the waves of a troubleſome world, with a chearful and ſerene mind, we muſt be *patient*, under the

tutions, ceremonies, and doctrines, which conſtitute pure Chriſtianity, demand our utmoſt reverence and eſteem; that we do not act up to the religion of reaſon and nature, when we dare to treat them with contempt, neglect or indifference; and that if you would be a rationaliſt, not in ſpeculation only, but in practice; you muſt add to the virtues of mere morality, the faith and principles of Chriſtianity: unleſs it appears that thoſe writings whence we are ſuppoſed to draw our belief as Chriſtians, are a cheat and impoſition on mankind. If they come in fact with that authority we aſcribe to them, the very dictates of natural religion challenge your regard to them; and that they do not, it is at your peril to aſſert, but upon ſure and *unqueſtionable* grounds.

Nor is the cauſe of Chriſtianity ſo *immaterial* a point of enquiry, as you ſeem too fondly to imagine, and which has been ſo frequently the

afflicting hand of Heaven, whoſe will we know to be an irreſiſtible law; and reſign up our wiſhes to his ſovereign pleaſure, in confidence of that tenderneſs which we know he bears to every individual of his creation.

As to thoſe precepts of Chriſtianity, which ſeem to bear the hardeſt upon human nature, viz. *repentance and reſtitution*, *mortification and ſelf-denial*, *humility*, *contentment and reſignation*, *forgiving*, yea, and *loving* your enemies; what are theſe, when rightly conſidered, but injunctions highly reaſonable in themſelves, and ſubſervient to our real happineſs? What can be more reaſonable than ſorrow, or a repentant anguiſh of mind, for offences more immediately committed againſt God, or reſtitution and retaliation for injuries we have at any time offered towards men? What more reaſonable and advantageous, than that we ſhould mortify and ſubdue thoſe fatal and rebellious luſts, which dare oppoſe the dictates of right reaſon, which would intice us into a violation of the laws of virtue and integrity, and ſubject us to the vengeance of an angry God? And humility, is not *that* a prudent, laudable, and advantageous ſpecies of conduct? That reputation or reſpect, which is the ſupreme ambition of *all*, how ſurely is it the portion of the affable, meek, and humble only! And as for thoſe pacific virtues, of rendering good for evil, forgiving injuries, and even loving our enemies, how notorious is it, in their behalf, that they ever appear to the advantage of thoſe who are eminent in the practice of them! How mollifying and attractive, how preventive of thoſe many reſtleſs tumults, which are ever harraſſing the minds of the revengeful and malicious!

ſubject of debate between us. What! ſhall the Maker of Heaven and earth be *ſaid* to addreſs his creatures in the language of *men*, and they either treat *him*, through whom he ſpeaks to them, with open ſcorn; or careleſſly *unconcern* themſelves, whether he ſpake to them or not? Shall an embaſſador from temporal majeſty and power claim ſo much, and one from Heaven ſo little reverence and reſpect? If you doubt, do you think it neceſſary to inquire into the credentials of the one, and will you not be at the ſame pains to examine into the pretenſions of the other *? How does this conſiſt with the dictates of even common ſenſe or common gratitude? *You* may perhaps thank your God, with the proud Phariſee in the Goſpel, that you are not as other men are, *extortioners*, *unjuſt*, *adulterers*, &c. *you* may poſſibly tranſcribe into outward practice that law within your breaſt, to which we ſuppoſe revelation comes in aid! *you* may want none of its imagined motives to influence *your* conduct—*you* may perhaps be able, unaſſiſted by any external guides, to learn, and live within the meaſures of your duty to God, your neighbour, and yourſelf; to do juſtice, love mercy, and to walk, as you think, humbly with your God; may contemplate thoroughly the nature and fitneſs of things, the native obligations and inducements to piety and virtue, and the inherent odiouſneſs and deſtructive qualities of vice and irreligion; *you* may perhaps be inſtructed from within

* What regard the Heathens would have paid to a *divine* revelation, had they been favoured with one, may be gathered from their eſteem of the Sybilline Oracles. For when thoſe books were burnt with the temple, during the wars of Marius and Sylla, the loſs was deemed the greateſt that could happen to the Roman republic, and people were ſent into all the provinces of the empire, and to the neighbouring villages, ſtreets, and allies, to gather up what could be found of thoſe books, and a collection was made to apply to as before upon extraordinary occaſions. And before thoſe books were known, Numa Pompilius, to give a ſanction to his laws, ſpread a report of his frequently converſing with the nymph Egeria, which wonderfully diſpoſed the people to receive all his new regulations, as ſo many divine inſpirations. Hence it appears, that the Heathens ſaw the neceſſity, believed the poſſibility, and earneſtly deſired the happineſs of a ſupernatural inſtructor and director.

yourſelf, in the knowledge of even the whole duty of man—Happy you, who *know* theſe things ſo well! happier ſtill if you *do* them!

But are there none in life who, with the *knowledge*, have not yet the *prudence* here ſuppoſed? Or rather, are there not millions in the world that have *neither*? And ſhall all your regards center in your own important ſelf? Have you no tender working of humanity, towards the wants and neceſſities of your fellow-creatures? Have you equally no regard for them who *know* not, and for them who *will* not *do* their duty? Have *you*, who enjoy the glorious light of the ſun, no ſenſe of the wretched ſtate and condition of thoſe who ſtill ſit in darkneſs? What if *you*, through a whimſical contempt of day, ſhould chooſe rather to purſue the buſineſs of your ordinary calling in the night; muſt day-light be therefore of leſs benefit and importance to the more rational part of the world? If *you* are whole and need not a phyſician, muſt they that are ſick not be preſcribed to? I will grant *you*, for argument ſake, to be poſſeſſed of right rational ſentiments of the Deity, and to be verſed in every ſpecies of worſhip and ſervice that it is neceſſary you ſhould pay him.

But are you ſure you are indebted to revelation for no part of this knowledge? If that be the caſe, how comes it to paſs, that there are ſo many inconſiſtencies in thoſe corners of the world, where the rays of revelation have not been *permitted* yet to reach, in both thoſe particulars? How comes it, that thoſe groſs abſurdities in the heathen worſhip of old, are in part continued among the pagan *Indians*, (in the extenſive empire of the Great Mogul) to this day?—The darkneſs, alas! which theſe unhappily labour under, how ſurely is it owing to a perverſe, *uncontrouled*, inhuman exertion

exertion of power in thoſe *rulers* over them, who unwarrantably intercept from them the important light.

But whilſt kings of the earth ſtand up, and rulers take counſel together, againſt the religion of the Lord's anointed; ſome by diverting that ſtream of divine benevolence, which means to flow alike to all, from its genuine and natural courſe; others, by polluting it with impious and unwholſome vanities; let me wiſh *you* to take care, that you do not ſtand charged with the lamentable guilt of either, directly or indirectly, impeding its progreſs within *your* ſphere of action.—Let me wiſh that you would be as induſtrious in inquiring into its real excellencies and virtues, as you are to expoſe its imagined blemiſhes and imperfections—Let not popular prejudice gain an aſcendancy over reaſon. On reaſon Chriſtianity is founded—Let reaſon therefore be the judge, (the only judge) to determine the merit of its pretenſions.

But alas! to what ſatisfactory purpoſe, ſay you, ſhall a man engage in an enquiry of this kind, ſo productive as it is, of never-ending diſputes? Why ſhould I not content myſelf, with endeavouring to diſcharge all the more *immediate* duties of morality, which is in fact acting up to, or anſwering, as far as is incumbent on each individual, all the ends and purpoſes of revelation?—A queſtion, which I will anſwer by *another*, alike pertinent—It is this—Can any point of knowledge be of equal importance, with that which, in any degree, reſpects a man's ſalvation? And, if it is not impoſſible (but on the contrary highly probable) that God may have made ſome *expreſs* declaration of his will, can any thing be more unjuſt, ungenerous, and unwiſe, not to enquire what that will is? Is your happineſs dependant on his pleaſure, and will you not uſe your endeavours to learn what his *whole* pleaſure is? Is

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it of no conſequence to be informed how to arrive to a right knowledge of the only true God and Saviour of mankind; that he will have mercy and not ſacrifice:—That he delighteth not in the blood of bulls and of goats, nor of men *?—That the ſacrifice of carnal luſts and appetites, are the oblations he requires? Is it of no moment to be directed to the *means* proper for obtaining pardon and forgiveneſs for paſt offences?—Are there any meaſures preſcribed by *natural* religion?—Whither then but to *revealed*, would you go for methods proper to appeaſe your offended God? or does the religion of reaſon and nature direct you to imagine you may be at liberty to offend, and he not authorized to take vengeance on the offence, or remit the puniſhment due to it, on what terms he himſelf ſhall propoſe? But thoſe terms, how ſhall they be known but by revelation?

True it is, he brought you into being by no voluntary concurrent act or conſent of your own; but, if from that arbitrary exertion of creative power in the Deity, which gave birth to the frail creature you are, you lay claim to an exemption from future miſery, notwithſtanding any tranſgreſſions in life, you may have fallen into; I would aſk, to whom you are indebted, for the *means* afforded you for obtaining *happineſs?* And with whom lies the blame, if future *miſery* is your portion? He that made you capable of ſinning, enabled you at the ſame time, to ſee not only into the natural and deſtructive tendency of ſin, but alſo into the advantages reſulting from a life of virtue.

When two ways lie before me on my journey, I am doubtful perhaps in my choice, whether of the two to take. One conver-

* And yet had your education been among thoſe with whom religious barbarities of the latter kind prevailed, are you ſure you ſhould not *conſcientiouſly* have complied with them?

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ſant in the country, ſays to me, Go you here, and you are ſure to meet with bogs or quick-ſands in your way; go you there, and you will find a country ſafe, fruitful, and delightſome. Whether of the two directions is it moſt likely I ſhall purſue? The latter, moſt aſſuredly—but that there are, I am told, ſome favourite recreations in the way, peculiar to that other road, which I would willingly indulge myſelf in, though at the hazard of my life. Well, I go, and am loſt. To what, let me aſk, but my own wayward miſconduct, can you with any propriety aſcribe my miſcarriage? You will urge to me, perhaps, that however man's freedom of action may be illuſtrated by the caſe above ſuppoſed, yet it does by no means remove the difficulties more immediately under conſideration. For as futurity is preſent to the Deity, all thoſe lapſes which may affect my *ſalvation*, muſt neceſſarily have been foreknown to him, e're my mother conceived me; how then does it conſiſt with the ſuppoſed goodneſs of that being, to bring me into a ſtate, which he knew *would* terminate in my entire ruin?

This is a point of enquiry, for a full diſcuſſion of which I muſt refer the reader to my treatiſe on *Predeſtination*, &c. while I paſs on to ſome other remarks on our Deiſt, whom I left deducing from Mr. *Chandler*'s declaration—" that if natural religion is not a part of " the religion of Chriſt, 'tis ſcarce worth while at all to enquire what " his religion is," (p. 6.) the following concluſion, *viz.* ' that then ' the other parts of the religion of Chriſt, are ſcarce worth any ' thing at all of our notice. So excellent and glorious a part of ' the Chriſtian *inſtitution*, ſays he, is true deiſm: and that, notwith- ' ſtanding all the abſurdity of Dr. *Waterland's* aſſertion, what he has ' cited from thoſe judicious divines, Dr. *Sherlock* and Mr. *Chandler*, ' *proves*, that deiſm is all in the Chriſtian inſtitution, that can poſſibly ' approve itſelf, to the true genuine reaſon of man.'—Our author's dexterity, in thus creating patrons to the cauſe of infidelity, from among

among real advocates for Chriſtianity, is extraordinary enough; nor is his method of reaſoning, throughout, leſs remarkable.

'After having ſaid, that every thing enjoined in the Goſpel to 'be believed as a rational doctrine, or profeſſed as a natural duty 'relating to God, our neighbour, and ourſelves, is an eſtabliſhed 'part of deiſm; the ſingle queſtion, ſays he, between Chriſtians 'and deiſts, is, whether the belief of natural doctrines, and the 'practice of natural duties, are all that is ſtrictly neceſſary, with 'regard to the divine approbation; and, conſequently, human hap-'pineſs, both preſent and eternal.' (p. 7.) And is this at laſt the caſe? Is the battle between infidels and Chriſtians, to end, after all, in a friendly ſhake of hands? If the ſingle queſtion between Chriſtians and deiſts, is whether the belief of natural doctrines, and the practice of natural duties, *&c.* is ſtrictly neceſſary to ſalvation; I here take upon me, in the name of the whole body of rational divines, to join iſſue with the plaintiff; and to declare, that the belief of natural doctrines, and the practice of natural duties, is always looked upon by *them, as neceſſary, with regard to the divine approbation.*

And when he ſays, that this is a queſtion or doubt which univerſally obtains among Chriſtians; he advances what, from a number of our moſt orthodox divines, I could prove to be not true. Nay, thoſe *duties*, (*viz.* the belief of natural, *&c.*) are ſo far too from being diſcountenanced by Chriſtianity, that they are, in fact, the very baſis on which it ſtands; and the only difference between Chriſtians and deiſts is, that the former *do* practiſe, or recommend to the practice of mankind, thoſe abovementioned duties, the latter, in reality, do not. *For*, as I before obſerved, thoſe doctrines are *natural* doctrines, and thoſe duties *natural* duties, as well what appear to be mediately or immediately recommended by God, as what

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ariſe from the dictates of *natural reaſon*. So that deiſts, by rejecting thoſe doctrines and precepts which evidently make a part of, are contained in, or may reaſonably be deduced from the Goſpel inſtitution, do manifeſtly oppoſe (and it concerns them much, to give the argument its due weight) the religion they pretend to profeſs; *viz.* the belief of *natural doctrines*, and the practice of *natural duties*: in other words, the belief and practice of the *religion of reaſon and nature*.

And when I acquieſce in the *concluſion* he draws from his ſix refined propoſitions, as well as the *propoſitions* themſelves, the ſum and ſubſtance of which 'is, that thoſe duties only are neceſſary to 'be believed, and practiſed by us, the *reaſon* of which we perceive 'to be founded in *nature*, and the diſcharge of thoſe in the beſt 'manner we can, is intimately connected with our happineſs, and 'the approbation of him, whoſe favour is better than life; and 'that then, if any thing elſe is enjoined as a duty in any, even in 'the Chriſtian inſtitution, it cannot be neceſſary to be obſerved, in 'order to eternal ſalvation,' (p. 8, 9.) what will follow from this very fair and honeſt conceſſion, but that the Chriſtian only is the man (where Chriſtianity I mean has been taught, and is eſtabliſhed) of true genuine religion, and that the deiſt is not; for as the ſum of all religion is the belief of natural doctrines, and the practice of natural duties; and if thoſe become *ſuch*, which are either *mediately* or *immediately* propoſed to us by God, (p. 9.) how can the deiſt pretend to be *religious*, and reject at the ſame time that plan of ſalvation, which is built on thoſe very principles?

Having kept pace with the Deiſt, ſo far as his refined definition of deiſm goes, and ſhewn, that before he proves it to be agreeable to the religion of reaſon and nature, he muſt make it appear that the idea

of revelation is an abſurdity, and Chriſtianity an impoſition; let us proceed to the examination of thoſe difficulties with regard to Chriſtianity, which he ſays, lie out of the *reach of our reaſon*, to determine of their truth or falſhood, and thoſe inſtitutions which are confeſſedly *no conſtituent parts* of religion (p. 12.) And here, after a formal harangue upon the buſineſs of the underſtanding, and the end of our creation, and that great caution and circumſpection which he profeſſes to have obſerved in his enquiry after *truth*, or rather (as ſhould ſeem) to rivet himſelf in *error*, he tells us, (p. 13.) "that "though it is ſaid by ſome, that Chriſtianity is grounded on na-"tural religion, and is an improvement of it; yet, after all that "has been ſaid to exemplify it, or that has been offered in proof "of it, I cannot poſſibly conceive, ſays he, how an entire and "*perfect* ſtructure, (which is the caſe of natural religion) can be "only a *foundation* for a perfect ſtructure; or how a *perfect* re-"ligion can be *improved*; or what is eſſential to man, can be "but of ſmall importance to him, in compariſon of what is ſu-"peradded, and to which his underſtanding is inadequate."

Though our Deiſt cannot conceive how a *perfect* ſtructure can be a *foundation* for a perfect ſtructure, will he not therefore allow it probable, that an *imperfect* ſtructure may become a means for the foundation of one that is perfect? The *religion of reaſon and nature*, I ſuppoſe *now* to call our attention not only to *natural duties*, ſtrictly, or *abſtractedly* called ſuch, but ſuch likewiſe as appear to be *revealed*; that the *latter* therefore may be added to the *former*, I hope you will allow poſſible; and if ſo, that natural religion was not the *perfect* ſtructure, without ſuch addition, as with it. *Perfection* is a term purely relative, and may therefore often become a comparative *imperfection*. That which will direct a man to an obedience *new* required of him, is his preſent *perfect* rule of action;

action; but would it be alike entire and perfect, where a more extenſive obedience ſhould be demanded of him? Will it not neceſſarily *call* for ſome *ſuperadded* notices and inſtructions, porportioned to the ſuperadded duties? And may not what was once *eſſential* to him, merely as *man*, be of ſmall importance to him, when compared with that ſuperadded ſyſtem of duties, preſcribed to him as a *Chriſtian?*

But, obſerve with what ſolemn abſurdity our Author again amuſes his readers, and impoſes on their eaſy credulity.

Having ventured to tell us with an air, which we are to interpret into a *well grounded* confidence, that what he aſſerts, is moſt infallibly *true*; and that his preſent ſentiments may very properly be "termed "deiſm, as *that* imports the religion of things, and not of unmean- "ing or many meaning words—of the heart, but not of the book; "it is not nominal, but real deiſm, ſays he, I now intend; and "by which I would fain be underſtood to mean that religion "which conſiſts of only ſuch doctrines and precepts, as appear to "have their *foundation in reaſon and* nature," (p. 13.) and then having attempted to ſhew, that Chriſtianity is not *that* kind of religion, he vouchſafes to tell us, as he is coming to the point, well knowing that he was then evidently the fartheſt from it, when he ſeemed *endeavouring* to be neareſt to it. And what after all *is* the *point?* Why, I think, ſays he, "that the grand foun- "dation of the difference betwixt deiſts, and the religious of all other "perſuaſions, is, whether any doctrine or precept, that has not its "foundation apparently in reaſon and nature, can be of the eſſence "of religion, and with propriety be ſaid to be a religious doctrine "or precept (p. 14.)

Among the religious of all denominations, the Chriſtian ſurely muſt be underſtood to make *one*. I would then gladly know of our author, *who* thoſe Chriſtians are, who aſſert that doctrines and precepts, which have not their foundation apparently in reaſon and nature, are the eſſence of Chriſtianity, and, with propriety may be ſaid, to be a religious doctrine or precept? Or *wherein* do they *teach* doctrines, that apparently have not their foundation in reaſon and nature? If he goes to the determination of councils and ſynods, 'tis a chance, but he's right. And yet, even *then*, he may be altogether as diſtant from the point in debate, as were their *infallible* deciſions too frequently from the *truth*. Search the *Scriptures*, and let me ſee him prove from *thence*, a ſanction to abſurdities, of that, or any other kind, and I will not wonder at his treating them with ſo little ceremony and reſpect. Till he can do that, he is fighting with a ſhadow; and unleſs he is willing, or *able*, to argue from the *original* ſenſe and *general* tenour of holy writ, he dictates with a mighty ill grace in the concerns of revelation. But to proceed.

"The whole body of Chriſtians, ſays our author, may be rank-
"ed under the two following claſſes, *1ſt*. Thoſe who maintain
"that doctrines and practices which have no foundation in reaſon
"or nature, may be of the eſſence of religion; and *2dly*. Thoſe
"who maintain that doctrines and practices, which do not *appa-*
"*rently appear* (pray obſerve his expreſſions, for they are in-
"comparably *expreſſive*) to be founded in nature and reaſon,
"may yet, notwithſtanding, be of the eſſence of religion.

That we may not, for want of *method*, confound our author's diſtinct arrangement of Chriſtian writers, and the ſeparate claſſes in which he has placed them, we will bring each of them under its proper

proper ſeparate examination. In order to which, it may be neceſſary, in the firſt place, to take a view of the *names* of thoſe who make up the firſt claſs of Chriſtian writers. And here, leſt you ſhould too haſtily *expect* to ſee it compoſed of *all*, or even any of *ſuch Chriſtian writers, as had obtained the greateſt reputation, both for ſound judgment and nervous reaſoning* (p. 2.) I muſt charge you, as you value the credit and reputation of your author, to be *ſatisfied* with the ſingle, though ſingular teſtimony, of the all-ſufficient *Zynglius*. One *good* evidence to a reaſonable man, is as ſatisfactory as a thouſand. And he (the great *Zynglius*) is pleaſed, it ſeems, to affirm, "that God may, if he pleaſes, out of the vaſt "ſovereignty of his will, command all that wickedneſs, which he "has forbidden, and make it our duty; and alſo forbid all "that holineſs, which he has commanded, and make it ſin to us "(p. 15.)."

The extraordinary nature of the doctrine quoted above, it is juſt as neceſſary for me to controvert, as it was for our author to introduce it, and that is not at all; unleſs he could prove, that in *that*, is comprehended the united ſenſe of the whole body of Chriſtian writers. And, if that in fact is the caſe, how comes he to have been ſo ſparing in his quotations? I ſhould rather have expected, he would triumphantly have uſhered in a few *Engliſh divines, of ſound judgment and nervous reaſon*, to have born his *Zynglius* company. But for want of this ſingle circumſtance alone, what he has built on his *firſt* claſs of Chriſtian writers, riſes but to a moſt magnificent caſtle in the air. Let us ſee then, if he is more happy and ſucceſsful in his *ſecond*.

"Thoſe Chriſtians of the ſecond claſs, he ſays, ſo far agree with "the deiſts, as to own, that God, who is infinite in knowledge,

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"and can never know things to be otherwiſe than they are in "themſelves, cannot poſſibly conſider, nor conſtitute any doctrine "or precept, to be of the eſſence of religion, which is not ſo in it-"ſelf, as not being founded in truth and reaſon (p. 15.)."

This being a reflection juſt expreſſive of common ſenſe and underſtanding, our author is pleaſed to make it the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of the *ſecond* claſs of Chriſtians; and, what is more, to compliment it with the *deiſts* ſolemn ſanction and approbation. And yet, no ſooner are they thus happily and amicably joined together, than (moſt unfortunately) an officious *but*, ſets them at once aſunder.

"They agree, ſays our author, with the deiſts, in owning, that "God who is infinite in knowledge, and can never know things "to be otherwiſe than they are in themſelves, cannot poſſibly con-"ſider, nor conſtitute any doctrine or precept, to be of the eſſence "of religion, which is not ſo in itſelf. *But* then they agree, as "the religion of nature thus abſolutely conſidered, and in its full "extent, is only known to God, if he ſhould be pleaſed to make "a *ſupernatural* revelation of ſuch parts of that law to us, which "our *unaſſiſted* reaſon could never have diſcovered; *ſuch* a revelation "ought to be gratefully received, and readily acknowledged. And "this, he tells us, we alledge to be the caſe of all ſpeculative, me-"taphyſical, and ſublime doctrines contained in the Scriptures, which "collectively compoſe the Chriſtian faith (p. 16.)."

And where, let me aſk, lies the abſurdity in this caſe? Our author grants, that God cannot *poſſibly* conſider or conſtitute any doctrine or precept to be of the eſſence of religion, which is not ſo of itſelf: why then ſhould we not acknowledge thoſe things to be of

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the very eſſence of religion, which we ſuppoſe him actually to have conſidered, *conſtituted, and appointed*;—though they be even ſuch things as our *unaſſiſted reaſon* could not have diſcovered to have been ſo. His firſt conceſſion ſuppoſes every thing *appointed* by God to be truly conſiſtent with religion, and conſequently, that it is inconſiſtent with the religion of reaſon and nature, to oppoſe what he has appointed (p. 16.)

Ah! but, ſays he, they (*i. e.* the rational Chriſtians) go farther ſtill than all this: for *they* ſay, "though no doctrine that has not "its *foundation* in reaſon and nature, can be truly a religious doc-"trine, yet doctrines that have ſuch a foundation (though that does "not appear) may, if God pleaſes, be communicated to us, either "by himſelf immediately, or mediately by his agents, without "any reflection on, or repugnancy to, any one of his attributes "(p. 16.)."

The unfairneſs of this repreſentation of Chriſtianity, is, I preſume, obvious enough to every one, who thinks not, or writes not, with the partiality of a deiſt. For all that the men of any importance in the great buſineſs of explaining ſcripture truths;—in other words, all that the *rational* divines have advanced on this point, is, that it is no argument of *weak* credulity, or an *irrational* foundation for our faith, if in the general plan of revelation there are ſome circumſtances *not* revealed, which lie beyond the *reach* of our enquiries;—that things in *this* reſpect may be incomprehenſible, and yet not *incompatible* with reaſon, or the purport of revelation. The errors and abſurdities which either popery or enthuſiaſm may have unwarrantably ingrafted on Chriſtianity, and which have in reality no foundation in reaſon and nature, affect not the original and real merit of the latter; and it muſt be igno-

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ignorance, or downright knavery in a writer, to lay them to the charge of Chriſtians without *exception*.

But having ſo very juſtly and *judiciouſly* ſtated the caſe in difference, between *us* and deiſts; obſerve the concluſion he *as* juſtly and judiciouſly draws from it. "The difference, ſays he, be-
"twixt rational Chriſtians and deiſts, will, without any farther
"trouble, be adjuſted, when this propoſition, which Chriſtians lay
"down for a certain truth," *viz.* "that the collections of writings,
"commonly called the Scriptures, are of divine inſpiration, and a
"revelation from God to mankind,—be plainly and clearly made
"appear to be ſo; and therefore the material queſtion depends
"upon the proof that is to be made by Chriſtians, that the Scrip-
"tures are a divine revelation, and the very word of God. For
"if that point be proved, ſays he, the controverſy is at an end,
"there being no true deiſt that will heſitate a moment to allow,
"that what God ſaith, is truth (p. 16, 17, 18.)." Which is declaring, in as expreſs terms as can be imagined, that if Chriſtians can but once prove to us, that the Scriptures are really of divine original and authority, we deiſts will abſolutely acquieſce in all thoſe doctrines which are deduced from them, even though they appear not to have their foundation in *reaſon and the nature of things*.

Here then you ſee the ultimate reſolution of a deiſt. If you will not ſuffer him to enjoy in peace the maxims of infidelity and deiſm, he will, rather than become a *true* Chriſtian, be content to be a Papiſt or enthuſiaſt. For who but ſuch as *thoſe* pretend to ground the obligation of believing things not founded in *reaſon* and the *nature* of things, on any pretended authority from holy writ? But paſſing by the compliment here paid by our author to Popery,

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enthuſiaſm, and ſuperſtition, let us attend him in his enquiry into the *aſſerted* authority of Scripture, which he promiſes to carry on with the utmoſt *impartiality*.

" Alas; alas! ſays he, here we have a ſurpriſing inſtance of the " want of *unanimity* among Chriſtians, where it ſeems to be ſo pe- " culiarly requiſite, that *without* it, they muſt not only expect to " fail of convincing deiſts of the truth of their cauſe, but alſo ren- " der it a doubtful point, whether they are rationally convinced of " the truth of it themſelves. For if we begin with the Roman Ca- " tholicks, who have vaſtly the advantage in point of numbers, and " plainly aſk *them*, how know you the Scripture to be the " word of God?—*They* anſwer, by the teſtimony of the church " (p. 18.)."

Now I would venture to appeal to any man of common ſenſe and underſtanding, whether the Popiſh method of proving the *ſenſe* of Scripture, from the *implicit* teſtimony of their church, is of any weight in our author's arguments, for diſproving the Scriptures to be the word of God. Nay, he acknowledges, that the weakneſs and abſurdity of this method of proof has been ſo fully ſhewn by ſome eminent *Proteſtants*, as to render it perfectly needleſs for deiſts to make any repetition of what is ſo generally known and approved (p. 19.). What a trifler then, even from his own confeſſion, is our worthy friend the Deiſt? But now for the principal anſwers vouchſafed to us by *Proteſtants*. " Why the one part, ſays he, " maintain, that they are known to be the word of God by *them-* " *ſelves*, to thoſe only whoſe eyes the ſpirit of God is pleaſed in a " diſtinguiſhing manner to open, to *perceive* the certain charac- " ters of divine truths in them (p. *ib.*). Another ſort maintain, " that they are known, and will manifeſtly appear to be the word

" of God by *themſelves*, upon an honeſt inveſtigation of mere na-
" tu al reaſon, to any man who ſhall impartially exerciſe it about
" them (p. *ib.*)."

Now as a freſh inſtance of our Deiſt's uſual impartiality and honeſt method of reading ſuch Chriſtian writers, as ſhould be found to obtain the *greateſt reputation* for *ſound judgment and nervous reading*, (p. 2.) we have, in ſupport of his charge, againſt the *one part* of Proteſtant divines, a quotation here from the authority of one Mr. *Pemble*. And concluding, I preſume, at laſt, that one *ſingle* advocate in ſome caſes is better than none at all, he determined, as the *Tillotſons*, the *Sharps*, *&c.* were council retained on the other ſide, boldly to riſk his fate on the weight and authority of Mr. *Pemble* *.

Well then, it appearing moſt unqueſtionably true, from what Mr. *Pemble* has advanced, notwithſtanding what all the great men have to ſay to the contrary; that—" we know the Scrip-
" tures to be the word of God, by *themſelves*, is an anſwer
" of a party of *Proteſtants* to the queſtion above---how know
" you the Scriptures to be the word of God? The Roman *Catho-*
" *lics* in *their* turn, ſays our author, reply, that Scripture is deli-
" livered to moſt Proteſtants by tranſlations from men, who by
" their *contrary tranſlations*, have proved themſelves fallible; there-
" fore granting that the originals be true, the tranſlations may be

* Mr. *Pemble*, in his treatiſe of grace and faith ſays, We know the Scriptures are the word of God by *themſelves*, the ſpirit of God *opening* our eyes to ſee thoſe natural and lively characters of divine truth which are imprinted on thoſe ſacred volumes. But how (he aſks a little after) does the Holy Ghoſt reveal unto us the truth of Scripture? (He anſwers) By removing thoſe impediments that hinder, and beſtowing thoſe graces, illuminations, and ſanctification, that make us capable of this knowledge. (Vid. our author, p. 19, 20.) Vid. alſo Dupin's Biblioth. Eccleſ. Author.

" far

" far otherwiſe, at leaſt, only one can be the true one, and which " muſt that be?"

Why, that for which you have the beſt and moſt *reaſonable* evidence---Becauſe " alterations in language, are, as our Deiſt avers, " unavoidable (p. 21.);" muſt there therefore of courſe be no ſuch thing as *true* language?—But ſays he, in reply, " As they " might poſſibly be corrupted by tranſcribers, and we cannot be " certain that they were not, the Scriptures, in thoſe latter " ages, cannot be proved to be the word of God, by *themſelves*. " For ſhall we know them to be ſo by their own teſtimony " concerning themſelves, or by the reaſonableneſs and apparent " truth of each and all the doctrines and precepts contained in them? " p. 21.).

If by the teſtimony of Scripture concerning *themſelves*, our author had meant nothing more than a teſtimony ariſing from the reaſonableneſs of their doctrines and precepts, I would aſk him, whether the reaſonableneſs of a doctrine is not one of the ſtrongeſt, though not the *ſole* argument to be expected in ſupport of its credibility and authority? " Well, but ſays he, the aſſurance of the " infallibility and inſpiration of the ſeveral authors of thoſe books " called the Bible, is the very point in queſtion, and requires to " be proved." Here again he ſubjoins this very ſhrewd remark, (as if it had been a point of univerſal diſpute among Chriſtians) that its own teſtimony, concerning itſelf, can be no proper evidence (p. 22.).

He is in too great a hurry to aſk us, whether we have or have not any other proof of the inſpiration of the authors of thoſe books called the Bible, than what ariſes from its *own* teſtimony concerning themſelves, well knowing that we have many: for one of

which I muſt refer you to a note below *, leſt I ſhould loſe ſight of our Deiſt in his haſty tranſition to the *ſecond* kind of proof of the divine authority of the holy Scriptures, *viz.* the reaſonableneſs and apparent truth of each of its doctrines and precepts reſpectively. "This, ſays he, is not ſo much as pretended by *thoſe* Pro-"teſtants, whoſe anſwer we are now particularly conſidering." Well, and how can we help it if it is not? Are the ſuppoſed abſurdities of one claſs of men to be placed to the account of the whole body of Chriſtian writers?---As well may we aſſert, that there is no ſuch thing in the world as right reaſon, becauſe our author, whilſt he pretends to eſpouſe it, ſhews ſo little of it in his writings. But to proceed;

"*They* (*i. e.* Mr. *Pemble*) eſteem mere morality, and the bare ex-"erciſe of our natural powers in matters of religion, altogether in-"effectual with regard to ſalvation: things beyond morality, and "out of the verge of human reaſon, they are ſo well aſſured are "not to be acquired by reaſon, that they aſcribe the acquiſition of "them wholly to the operation of the Holy Ghoſt (p. *ib.*)." Do

* Not to inſiſt upon other arguments, which might be alledged with great ſtrength and cogency of reaſon; that compleat ſyſtem of morals, which gives ſo great a luſtre to their writings is, I think, a ſufficient proof that the Evangeliſts, and the reſt of the ſacred penmen of the New Teſtament, were divinely inſpired; 'tis true indeed, there is ſcarce any one precept therein contained, but what may be met with in the writings of the heathen philoſophers, but then they are ſo detached from one another, and ſo deſtitute of a proper ſanction to enforce them, and are ſo defaced by a monſtrous heap of abſurdities, which are delivered along with them, that they fall far ſhort of that perfection which ought to be expected, to make them come home to men's purpoſes, and render them of general uſe. Whereas, in the Scriptures, all the doctrines are ſummed up in a plain and eaſy manner, and in a ſmall compaſs, free from any embarraſs, and at the ſame time that they exhibit to us a full rule of duty to God, our neighbour, and ourſelves, have all the authority that either reaſon or revelation can give to recommend them, and are enforced by ſuch proper ſanctions, as muſt neceſſarily have a great weight upon every ſober and well diſpoſed mind.

they

they ſo? and what then? Do *they* (*viz.* that body of Proteſtants *repreſented* by Mr. *Pemble*) declare, that mere morality, or the bare exerciſe of our natural powers in matters of religion, is altogether ineffectual, with regard to ſalvation? Why then give me leave, if you pleaſe, to explain the *meaning* of that declaration. It is this; *viz.* that mere morality, *i. e.* that kind of morality which is falſly *called* ſuch—a morality which would exclude revelation from the religion of *right reaſon*,—the morality in fact of *deiſts*,—that ſuch kind of morality will be ineffectual to ſalvation. A truth to which, I myſelf can very readily ſubſcribe; as will, I believe, every rational divine you can name me,—and not only this, but they will agree with Mr. *Chandler*, that "the religion of Chriſt "muſt be *underſtood*, before it can, or ought to be believed, and "that it muſt be proved to be a conſiſtent and rational religion, be-"fore a man can be under any obligation to receive it."

When therefore our author took upon him to aſſert, from the one example of Mr. *Pemble*, that this is not ſo much as pretended by any eſtabliſhed body of divines (p. 23.), and that none but ſuch as Mr. *Chandler* were ſo rational as to maintain that opinion, he does not do juſtice to the church of *England* clergy. If they declare that a man muſt be *ſupernaturally* illuminated, in order to perceive the characters of divine truth in the holy Scriptures, what more do they mean, than that a man muſt cheriſh in his breaſt ſomething ſuperior to the too *natural* diſpoſitions and bias of an infidel; ſomething more than the ſuggeſtions of pride, prejudice, and partiality (which too uſually uſurp the ſovereignty of right reaſon) to judge rightly of the truth of revelation.

Nor is *Chillingworth*, as our author would inſinuate, the only great man among the ſeveral patrons of Chriſtianity, who cares to own that "natural *reaſon* is the only true judge in thoſe contro-

"verſies,

" verſies, where the Scripture itſelf is the ſubject of them " (p. 24.).

Mr. *Locke* ſays, that without the evidence and uſe of reaſon, men cannot be able to diſtinguiſh divine revelation from diabolical impoſtures *.

Mr. *Hales*, ſpeaking of the *laity* of the *ſecond* century, obſerves, That one great cauſe of error was, that the people, through ſloth and blind obedience, *examined* not the things that were taught, but like beaſts of burden, patiently couched down, and indifferently underwent whatever their ſuperiors laid upon them †.

Mr. *Bullock* ſays, " if I cannot depend upon the plaineſt dictates of reaſon, how can I be aſſured that any doctrine is a revelation from God? If I receive it without conſulting my reaſon, then for aught I know, it may be an impoſture, and I am every way as liable to embrace an error as the truth ‡."

Biſhop *Taylor* has well obſerved, 'tis reaſon that is the judge, and fathers, councils, tradition and Scripture the evidence §.

Mr. *Chillingworth*, Archbiſhops *Tillotſon* and *Sharp*, Biſhops *Burnet* and *Wilkins*, Dr. *Scott*, and indeed all our ableſt divines agree, that we ought to make uſe of our reaſon, to inform us of the truth of any pretended revelation, and to enable us to underſtand the doctrines which it teaches. You ſee then, that by the united teſtimony

* Vid. *Locke* on human underſtanding, vol. II. chap. 18.

† Vid. *Hale*'s tract of ſchiſm.

‡ Vid. *Bullock*'s ſermons, p. 19.

§ Lib. I. chap. 2.

of

of men of the greateſt reputation for *ſound learning*, &c. that reaſon was never meant to be excluded from our enquiries into either the ſubject matter or authority of revelation. Nor does it appear, that even what we call *ſupernatural* matters, or, what ſeems to us to come from Scripture as ſuch, are incapable of being examined and judged by that rule,——" for *ſupernatural* matters " are what our author charges us with believing, upon Scrip- " ture authority (p. 24.)." I admit the charge, and let the Deiſt make from it what advantages he can.—Why, *ſays* he, " mat- " ters *ſupernatural* are incapable of an examinination by *natural* rea- " ſon, and therefore are incapable of being apparently reaſonable, " or being *approved* of as ſuch," by our reaſoning faculties, (p. *ib.*)

If mere confident aſſertions were equivalent to real argument, I know not who would merit more, as a writer, than our author---Supernatural matters, ſays he, are incapable of an examination by natural reaſon. But wherefore? Why muſt it neceſſarily be beyond the reach of natural reaſon, to acquieſce in the doctrine and declaration of truths which were once *ſupernatural*; *i. e.* beyond the conception or invention of the original ſtrength of reaſon?—Truths which *ſtill* lie out of the reach of human conception, of which ſort there are undoubtedly not a few, are, and will be *ſupernatural* till revealed. But will it therefore follow, that *when* diſcovered they become not objects of our natural reaſon and examination? What I was not *able* to diſcover of myſelf (and all men were once upon the ſame footing, with reſpect to ſome particular truths with which they were afterwards made acquainted) was ſurely a *ſupernatural* diſcovery to *me*, when made by another perſon; and cannot my reaſon, do you think, enable me to determine rightly concerning the truth, falſhood, or probability, of that with which I was thus *ſupernaturally* made acquainted?

And

And our Deiſt, will he dare to ſay, that even *Chillingworth*, and our other rational divines are gravelled, when they come to the diſcuſſion of this, what he calls, unmanageable point; and at a loſs to prove that the Scriptures are known to be the word and revelation of God, upon an *honeſt* inveſtigation of mere natural reaſon? (p. 25.) And ſhall he, with a ſneer, talk of a thing 'being 'what it is, and *more* than it is at the ſame time? And of a man's 'having the underſtanding of a man, and yet diſcerning what is out 'of the reach of human intellectual faculties to perceive (p. 2.)?' Why muſt the evidence of ſupernatural truths conſidered as above (and what other kind of *ſupernaturals* are there, but mere *contradictions* and *inconſiſtencies*, which our church abſolutely diſclaims?) why muſt the evidence of ſupernatural truths, really and in fact ſuch, be neceſſarily out of the reach of human inveſtigation?

But not to dwell any longer on the evidence ariſing from the *internal* characters of the divine pages, let us hear what our Deiſt would object to thoſe *external* ones, *prophecies* and *miracles*. "Theſe, he thinks, even when we have reckoned up all the pro-"phecies given by *Sybils*, *Jews*, or *Chriſtians*, or miracles at any "time wrought, fall vaſtly ſhort of affording the proof or *ſatiſ-"faction* to be *expected*. For *they* never, he ſays, can *prove*, that "the collection of tracts, commonly called the Bible, were written "by the perſons reſpectively whoſe names they bear; that the "Deity immediately dictated to, and impreſſed upon the mind of "each writer, the ſubject matter contained therein, effectually re-"ſtraining each one from mixing his own conceptions with what "had been thus dictated to him; and that theſe books have been "faithfully tranſmitted from their original copies, down to us "without any corruption, alteration, addition, or diminution; and "then if prophecies and miracles fall ſhort of proving theſe points, "which moſt certainly they do, *then conſequently* they fall equally

"ſhort

" ſhort of proving the Scriptures to be a divine revelation, and the " very word of God (p. 26.)."

Obſerve now with what *ſyllogiſtic ſagacity* our Deiſt attempts to reaſon away the authority of holy writ. Becauſe the divine *original* of the *ſcriptures* cannot be proved by a medium, by which it was never intended it ſhould be proved, *therefore* it is not capable of being proved at all. He ſuppoſes that miracles and prophecies given forth by Chriſtians, Jews, and Sybils, are *urged* to prove, in the firſt place, that the Scriptures were written by the very perſons whoſe names they bear; and ſecondly, that theſe perſons were inſpired, and infallible in every word they wrote. Now if that be the caſe, he can ſurely produce ſome prophecies given *forth* by Jews, Sybils, and Chriſtians, and miracles ſomewhere wrought, to which Chriſtians refer, as what were expreſſly given or done for that very end. Till he does that, his charge is groundleſs, inſignificant, and impertinent.

But if he means to ſay, that prophecies actually *accompliſhed*, and miracles really known to be worked by thoſe very perſons under whoſe names the *Scriptures* are ſaid to be wrote, have, added to the intrinſic merit of the doctrines they enforce, a rational claim to our attention, he ſuppoſes the very fact. And if evidences ſo confirmative of their *authenticity* ſtamp not conviction in *his* breaſt, we may reaſonably conclude that he would not be convinced, though one ſhould *riſe from the dead* to atteſt it. And though *miracles* and *prophecies* do fall ſhort of proving that theſe books have been *faithfully tranſmitted* from their reſpective original copies down to us, without any corruption, alteration, addition, or diminution, what is that to his purpoſe, unleſs he can prove that they ever were *appealed* to for that *end? Parts*, *learning*, and *integrity*, are the uſual requiſites

recommended for the diſcovery and removal of any difficulties of this kind, to which the Scriptures in common with other writings may reaſonably be preſumed to be ſubject. And had our Deiſt poſſeſſed an equal ſhare of the *latter*, with his perhaps juſt pretenſions to the *former* of thoſe qualifications, he would not have ſunk thus low in the eſteem of impartial men, as a reaſoner on revealed truths. But to proceed.

Our Deiſt ſeems very ſagaciouſly to imagine, that we muſt firſt prove every *tittle* of the writings of the Old and New Teſtament to be penned by immediate inſpiration, and that the penmen deliver to us *nothing* but what was actually dictated to them by the Deity, e're we can pretend to recommend thoſe books to the world, as an eſtabliſhed repoſitory of revelation. But this, let me tell him, was neither neceſſary nor intended.

The *infallible teſtimony* the ſeveral writers themſelves received, and did afterwards give to the truth of the particular facts they relate, is ſufficient to give them credit as *authors*, with every impartial reader and enquirer; even allowing them, at the ſame time, the general fallibility of nature as men. In order to do juſtice to revelation, we ſhould be careful to diſtinguiſh rightly the *man* from the *miniſter* of *revealed* truths, the hiſtorian from the prophet; nor expect inſpiration where inſpiration is out of the queſtion. Some things are propoſed to us in Scripture, as neceſſary objects of our *faith*; ſome more eſpecially for proper guides to our moral *practice*. Of the firſt ſort, are thoſe particulars which the prophets and apoſtles received, by either an articulate ſound from Heaven, or by viſions and other ſupernatural appearances, or by prophetic ſuggeſtions of the divine ſpirit; the truth of which they either ſealed with their blood, or confirmed by extraordinary miracles. Nor will it be at all difficult to diſtinguiſh truths advanced upon the authority

of

of *inſpiration*, and thoſe which are recommended only on the foot of reflection and natural reaſoning, or as matters merely hiſtorical.

The ſacred writers, by a more ſerious and ſincere examination into the real truth of things, added to the many extraordinary lights they from time to time received, furniſh out to us a more noble treaſure of uſeful doctrines and maxims, than are to be drawn from the moſt elaborate reſearches of other men, the obſervance of which they enforce by the diſcovery of many important truths *ſupernatural*—truths not attainable *by natural reaſon*, which, and which *alone*, were the ſubject of their inſpiration. Out of the four Evangeliſts, two of them were eye and ear witneſſes of what they relate, *viz.* St. *Matthew* and St. *John*. Did they need *inſpiration*, do you think, to make them write as honeſt men? If ſo, a man is a fool to believe one word of *Engliſh*, *Greek*, or *Roman* hiſtory? The two others wrote confeſſedly by the directions and inſtruction of St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*; and were equally capable of writing with hiſtorical honeſty and integrity, as the former. So that it is not ſo neceſſary for the credibility of Scripture ſtory, as our author would inſinuate, that the ſubject matter of it in general ſhould be impreſſed on the minds of each writer; and every thing therein penned, be the reſult of actual immediate inſpiration.

According to our preſent *tranſlation* indeed, it is ſaid, *all Scripture is given by inſpiration, and is profitable for doctrine*, &c. 2 Tim. chap. iii. v. 16. The pointing of the words, as they ſtand in moſt, if not all editions, proves againſt it.—Πασα γραφη, θεοπνευσος, καὶ ωφελιμος. Θεοπνευσος here is put in *appoſition* only; and καὶ, inſtead of *et*, is to be rendered *etiam*, with ἐστι underſtood, and

then the ſenſe is at once made clear, and will run thus—All ſcripture, given by inſpiration, is *even* profitable for doctrine, &c. *

The Apoſtle's meaning from which words is, that all Scripture given by inſpiration, *i. e.* every *prophetic part* of Scripture, every prophecy given, or declaration made by thoſe ſeveral inſpired teachers and prophets, is a memento to our rational and moral conduct; and when conſidered with due attention, becomes profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, &c.

But to return. "Our Deiſt cannot *conceive* how plain and *ob-*
"*vious* truths can be revealed, in a miraculous and *ſupernatural*
"manner (*ib.*)." And where, I would aſk, is it required of him that he ſhould? What more is propoſed to our belief, than that ſome plain and *obvious* truths (truths which are the immediate object of even *natural* reaſon and religion) are in the ſacred writings enforced by ſome *other ſupernatural* doctrines, *i. e.* doctrines ſo ſupernaturally made known to us, that reaſon alone could not *naturally* have attained to the knowledge of them—Such as God's creating, with a view of hereafter judging the world by *Jeſus Chriſt*, his ſending that very divine perſon among us, who one day is to be our judge, to be firſt our teacher and inſtructor, that by his life and converſation he might approve himſelf a complete pattern of *virtue* and *holineſs* here, and by his death and reſurrection, give *aſſurance* that he came to open to us a way to perfect bliſs hereafter.

Are theſe, I would aſk, intelligible doctrines, or are they not? And may they, or may they not be admitted into our creed, with-

* For the incorrectneſs and unexactneſs of Scripture ſtile, and different readers, vide Dr. Brockleſby, p. 20. to 26.

out

out offering any violence to our underſtanding? Let me, for the preſent, ſuppoſe our Deiſt to anſwer in the affirmative, and to admit that they are worthy and valuable truths, deſerving our utmoſt veneration. But what then? "It cannot appear to *me*, "ſays he, that they were therefore *miraculouſly* and *ſupernaturally* "revealed; becauſe in the *firſt* place, they have not been *proved* to "be ſo; and *ſecondly*, becauſe they are to be diſcovered to be what "they are by the human underſtanding, in the ordinary and na-"tural uſe of its faculties (p. *ib.*)."

Here I muſt lay before you another inſtance of our Deiſt's great talent for ſophiſtry and falſe reaſoning, and his dexterity too in ſubſtituting ſplendid nonſenſe in the room of real argument. In the firſt place, nothing is to be admitted in proof of revelation, but what meets with our *Deiſt*'s ſolemn ſanction. Secondly, Things cannot be diſcovered to be what they *are*, by our underſtanding and the ordinary and natural uſe of our faculties, if they were at firſt made known to the world in a miraculous and ſupernatural *manner*. His reaſoning thus on this point, I impute to his confounding the *nature* of *revealed* truths, with the *manner* of their being conveyed. He imagines that every truth muſt be in fact, ſupernatural, *i. e.* not capable of being known to be what it is, by the *natural* uſe of our reaſoning faculties, even *when* diſcovered, provided it was made known in a *manner* ſupernatural. He that ſees not into the fallacy of this deduction, muſt be but little qualified to judge of the force of any argument at all.

But again.—"As to all the myſterious and unintelligible parts "of Scripture, they are the ſame, ſays our Deiſt, as if they were not "written, as to any good purpoſe that can be ſerved by them; and to "ſuppoſe that they give forth unintelligible inſtructions and pro-"poſitions to his creatures, is to prove God, in fact, a mere *trifler*."

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If by myſterious unintelligible propoſitions, our Deiſt means ſuch things only whoſe *manner* and *form* of exiſtence are unintelligible, let him but conſider, how many myſteries there are of that kind in the ſyſtem of natural religion; and then judge, whether any but ſuch arrant triflers as *himſelf* will pretend to oppoſe them to the prejudice of revelation, Whether or no any *other* unintelligible propoſitions have the pretended ſanction of revelation, I may perhaps enquire, as I go along with our Deiſt's anſwer to a reply to the *author of Chriſtianity not founded on argument*; which ſeems principally to have been the occaſion of this very extraordinary treatiſe. The reaſon for it is very obvious. *That* being a book, on the credit of which the very life and ſoul of infidelity ſeemed principally to depend, it was neceſſary that an anſwer ſo apparently concluſive, ſhould not paſs upon the world, without meeting ſomewhere with an *attempt*, at leaſt, towards a reply. But how diſproportioned our Deiſt's abilities are to his *endeavours*, to overturn the ſound reaſoning of Dr. *Benſon*, we ſhall eaſily ſee by the few following obſervations, which I offer not in the leaſt in defence or vindication of the latter, (for he ſtands in no need of any) but to expoſe the groſs ſophiſtry of the former. The Doctor ſpeaks truth, honeſty, and integrity in every page, and flaſhes unwilling conviction even in the face of our Deiſt, as appears from the various ſubterfuges to which he is forced to have ſuch frequent recourſe.

It having been aſſerted, that the rational divines prove all things, and hold faſt that which is good, and that what is good in all caſes may readily be diſtinguiſhed from what is evil*, "the inference "which our ſagacious author draws therefrom, is, that as in mere "matters of morality, only reaſon can readily diſtinguiſh what is "morally good from what is morally evil,—ſuch matters only

* Vid. Benſon's reaſonableneſs of Chriſtian Religion, p.

"can,

" can, he ſays, according to this way of arguing, be caſes of im-
" portance, that is, with regard to the favour of God and eternal
" ſalvation (p. 31.)" Here our Deiſt thinks he has drawn ſuch a concluſion from his antagoniſt's mode of reaſoning, as muſt neceſſarily bring him under difficulties inſurmountable; and diſable him from proving matters of *faith* to be matters of importance.

But I would aſk, whether it is not the united opinion of the whole body of rational divines, that morality is one principal end of Chriſtianity? And if ſo, muſt not the means conducive to that end, ſuch as are its articles of faith and poſitive precepts, be proportionably important too? (*vide* ſupra p. 47.) And can you, I would aſk, ſeparate with any manner of propriety a belief of truths revealed by the *immediate direction of God*, (and not *natural* objects, perhaps, of our notice) from the catalogue of *moral* duties? But " how, ſays the Deiſt, does it appear, that the grand articles
" of Chriſtianity, when they are now no more to be judged of by
" human powers, than they were before to be found out by them,
" are matters of importance? And how can things with propriety
" be ſaid to be revealed to the human race, of which man has no
" faculty of forming an adequate idea or judgment? (p. 34.)

What gave occaſion to this query, was, an inſinuation that without the Scripture, reaſon, or men's natural faculties, would never have found out many things that are revealed in the Bible *. It may be true, that many things revealed to us in the Goſpel, could not have been *found* out by the unaſſiſted powers of human reaſon; but as I obſerved before (p. 90.) no concluſion can be drawn from thence, that now they *are* diſcovered, they become not objects of our examination and enquiry. Till this can be diſproved, the above

* Vid. Ben. p. 90, 91.

cavil

cavil falls ingloriouſly to the ground. But then, ſays he, " to " talk of a revelation of things to man, in aid of reaſon, which " though eaſily underſtood, yet reaſon cannot diſcover any proper " uſe that can be made of them, is alike abſurd and contradictory. " But ſo abſurd and contradictory a declaration is this, ſays he, " that God will judge the world by Jeſus Chriſt. This, ſays he, " does not appear to have any foundation in reaſon or nature; " nor is there any principle or premiſes from whence they may be " drawn. God will judge the world in righteouſneſs, and it is a " matter of indifference to the creature by *whom*. And as reaſon " cannot make any improvement of this doctrine, how can it be " ſaid, with either propriety or truth, that it was given in aid " of it (p. 35.).

Becauſe a deiſt can make no improvement of this doctrine, is it therefore evident that no body elſe can? or that what he himſelf may advance on that head, does actually proceed from the ſuggeſtions of reaſon, and not rather from ſome principle which beſt ſuits him, for the preſent, to ſubſtitute in its room? Is it not ſome confirmed prejudice, ſome inveterate obſtinacy lying in the way *between* reaſon and conviction, which hinders *him* from reaping that advantage from the declaration of God's judging the world, by Jeſus Chriſt that he might?

" Admitting it to be a truth, that God will judge the world by " Jeſus Chriſt, of what more conſequence to the world in general, " ſays he, is the knowledge of this truth, than that there being a " burning mountain in the kingdom of *Naples*, is an advantage " to the people of *England*? Then this is a juſt objection, ſays he, " againſt the divinity of this doctrine, becauſe it is greatly impro- " bable, that God ſhould ſpecially interpoſe to acquaint the world

with

" with this, or any other truth, the knowledge of which man-
" kind would do altogether as well without (p. *ib.*)."

There cannot be required plainer proofs of the deſperate ſtate of our Deiſt's cauſe, than are the mean artifices to which he thinks it neceſſary to have recourſe for its ſupport. Like a fox well nigh run down by his purſuers, and unable any longer to truſt to a fair and open chace, he begins to practiſe at laſt all the little ſhifts and doubles he can make, to protract, though but for a moment, the fate he ſees unhappily approaching. Had this circumſtance of God's judging the world by *Jeſus Chriſt* been omitted, and nothing more had been obſerved concerning the *diſtribution* of rewards and *puniſhments* in another ſtate, than that ſuch a ſtate would one time or another commence—how natural would it have been for men to have enquired how it came to paſs, that revelation, the principal buſineſs and boaſted merit of which is its making diſcoveries not attainable ſolely by reaſon, ſhould yet leave us ſo much in the dark, as is here ſuppoſed, in a matter of ſuch great moment?

The time *when*, the manner *how*, and the perſon by *whom* this grand affair is at laſt to be conducted, are circumſtances of information, which every *right reaſoner* would naturally have expected from revelation; nor do I believe, that even the deiſts would have been the laſt to have complained of ſuch deficiency.—And if ſuch be their hardened inſenſibility and ingratitude, as that inſtead of its being a motive to their praiſe and thankſgiving, they make this ſo material a diſcovery an additional argument to ſupport them in their preſumptious infidelity — I judge them not,—there is one that judgeth,—even that ſame Jeſus whom they deſpiſe.

As for thoſe twelve propoſitions, which our Deiſt has introduced with ſuch an air of ſolemnity and importance, it may be but juſ-

tice to him, and to the reader, to tranſcribe them, that the latter may make what advantage from them he can (p. 37, 38, 39, 40. *.) I own, that I thought eleven out of the twelve might have been ſpared, and that the laſt was the only one that afforded matter for conſideration. But this I leave to your conſideration, whilſt I haſten to enquire into *that* which our author ſeemed to intend as a corollary to all the reſt, which is this. "All other means, ſays "he, (beſides reaſon) for procuring happineſs, that either have, "are, or may be deemed neceſſary, and made uſe of as ſuch, by "Jews, Pagans, Chriſtians, Mahometans, or others, are unnatural

* 1. That the firſt cauſe of all things is a being, not only of the moſt boundleſs power, but alſo of the moſt unlimited and perfect reaſon or underſtanding.

2. That in nature, there is the right and the wrong, of every caſe that can poſſibly exiſt, or reſult from the infinitely various poſitions and modifications of either ſimple or complex ideas, propoſitions, or things, at leaſt, of all thoſe caſes that right and wrong can poſſibly be relative to.

3. It may fairly be preſumed, that infinite reaſon is alone capable of diſtinguiſhing unerringly, betwixt right and wrong, in all and every of that infinite variety of caſes that ever has, does, or can poſſibly exiſt.

4. How far each individual of the human ſpecies can, or may in reaſon and equity be expected, to go in conformity to the immutable laws of rectitude in judgment and in practice, is probably only known to God; and as we cannot know, ſo we ought not to preſume to determine concerning it.

5. How deficient ſoever we are in the knowledge of nature, of each others intellectual abilities and moral conduct, much more of the abſtract nature and perfections of God; yet we are in general, as certain as we are of the exiſtence of ſuch a being, that he is poſſeſſed of every poſſible perfection, and will not in the leaſt deviate in his conduct from perfect rectitude.

6. Therefore if God will require a perfection of God, (if I may expreſs it thus) from his imperfect creatures, but in proportion to the perfection of their reaſon; for to produce a rectitude of manners more perfect or conformable to truth than they have reaſon or underſtanding to direct them to, is impoſſible.

7. To govern our conduct by our reaſon is our duty, and is all God requires of us; and to neglect to regulate our conduct by our reaſon, in that proportion which God has been pleaſed to diſpenſe it to us, is criminal, or blame-worthy.

8. As there is no individual of our ſpecies, but what has been more or leſs guilty of deviating from the rule preſcribed him by his reaſon, either the whole ſpecies are un-

"and

" and foreign to the purpoſe, and conſequently are ſuperfluous and " downright ſuperſtition."

If our author will give me leave to except two out of the four inſtitutions above mentioned, I will from my ſoul, join iſſue with him at once—But can he ſee no difference in point of value and importance, between the Chriſtian and Jewiſh diſpenſation, and the Heathen and Mahometan rituals of religion? A ſet of words jumbled together into ſuch a confuſed inconſiſtent mixture of ideas, can be parallelled only by the celebrated *Bos Fur Sus atque Sacerdos*, in the mouth of every ſchool boy. But that the Deiſt might not be thought to give the preference, among this medley of diſpenſations, to that which we call the *Chriſtian*, he tells you at once, that the " ſuppoſed ſatisfaction for ſin, by Chriſt's death, is

pardonably guilty before God, or elſe repentance and reformation are the means of reconciliation with him, and of reſtoring us to his favour.

9. That repentance and reformation are the natural means of reconciling us to God, when we are conſcious of our having offended him, is manifeſt, from their being invariably recommended to us by our reaſon on all ſuch occaſions, as the means proper for effecting it; for were the caſe otherwiſe, they could not be dictated by reaſon, as a means to that end; becauſe had they not a natural tendency to anſwer the end, they would be unfit for our uſe, on account of their ſignificancy; and to make uſe of inſignificant means, is a prepoſterous and unwarrantable conduct; and to ſuppoſe what is prepoſterous and unwarrantable can be the dictate of reaſon, is abſurd and a direct contradiction.

10. Therefore to repent of what, upon a cool review of our conduct, appears to be criminal, and to reform it, is a detale of our reaſon, is what God the author of our beings requires of us, in order for us to do on our parts what he knows to be neceſſary to our happineſs.

11. If God requires and directs us by reaſon and conſcience, to perform what he knows is neceſſary to our happineſs, he will certainly do on his part what he knows is neceſſary to the end, *viz.* forgive us our ſins, and re-inſtate us in his favour. And *if* ſo, then

12. All other means that either have, are, or may be deemed neceſſary, and made uſe of as ſuch, by Jews, Pagans, Chriſtians, Mahometans, or others, are unnatural and foreign to the purpoſe; and conſequently are ſuperfluous and downright ſuperſtition.

" a doctrine entirely repugnant to reaſon, and as ſuch, to be re-
" jected with ſcorn (p. 41.)."

Whether it is, or is not an abſurd doctrine, it is not my buſineſs to enquire, till it can be made clear to me, that the *Scriptures* advance that, or any other doctrine in the *abſurd* ſenſe, he or ſome others, may, perhaps, *ſuppoſe* they do. In the mean time, I would deſire it to be conſidered, that ſo far are articles of religion, ſuppoſed by *our* church to be obligatory upon our faith, and no farther, than as they conſiſt with the dictates of *right* reaſon. And therefore let this or that particular doctrine be enjoined by a *Luther*, a *Calvin*, or even a *Pemble*, as eſſential to ſalvation; let the tenets of a *Whitefield* or a *Weſley* captivate the giddy minds of the vulgar, and draw them into abſurdities (*ſuppoſing*, I ſay, *that* to be the caſe) Chriſtianity never meant to eſtabliſh, muſt all or either of theſe *ſuppoſed irreconcilables* be made *reconcilable* with right reaſon, or revelation be no more? And muſt Chriſtianity itſelf be a cheat, becauſe perhaps there are thoſe among its ſeveral interpreters and expoſitors who would cheat men out of their *reaſon*, in order to palm upon them their own enthuſiaſtic *antichriſtian* extravaganza's, for ſound genuine revelation-tenets? The *Magna Charta* of a Chriſtian is the Bible, with this *peculiar* circumſtance in its favour, that *no power* on earth can claim a *right* to add to or diminiſh from it. Here then let God and the Scriptures be true, and every man, every wrong-headed commentator a liar; nor think that becauſe perhaps ſome doctrines, *unwarrantably* drawn from Scripture, are in reality *ſuperrational* and *ſupernatural*, that therefore nothing in revelation is either rational or natural.

" But how, ſays the Deiſt, can revelation be ſaid, or at leaſt
" proved, to be an aid to human reaſon, when ſo many various
" and even contradictory *interpretations* are put on ſeveral great

" and

" and important paſſages in it? And how does it appear that thoſe
" who ſo much value themſelves upon their being poſſeſſed of this
" glorious additional talent, have been ſo much *aided* in the right
" uſe of their natural reaſon, and leſſening the perverſion and abuſe
" of it, as might well be expected from the pompous repreſentation
" and high character that has been given of it? (p. 42, 43.)."

When we talk of revelation as an aid to human reaſon, we can only mean that it makes (as I have before obſerved) diſcoveries which the latter could not of *itſelf* have acquired, and that a collection of writings (containing ſuch a revelation) may have been preſerved to us for that purpoſe, I ſee no manner of reaſon to diſpute; but that theſe writings ſhould not in ſome degree ſhare the fate of *others*, and like them be *capable* of being miſinterpreted or miſapplied by the ignorance, pride and prejudice of ſome, or the diſhoneſt and diſingenuous perverſion of parts of others, I can ſee no manner of reaſon to admit—Nor does this proceed from a greater obſcurity in the ſacred writers themſelves than there is in other books. But becauſe men of different parts, capacities, ſkill in languages, parties and ſects, read and comment on them, and inſtead of ſearching the Scriptures in order to find out what is declared *in* them, they only hunt for evidence in order to juſtify what they had imbibed or impoſed on them——What wonder if *ſuch* are
" *not aided in the right uſe of their natural reaſon, and the leſſening*
" *the perverſion of it, as our author thinks might be expected!*"

" But how comes it to paſs, ſays the Deiſt, if revelation was
" intended in fact to reſtrain men from vice in general, and of con-
" ſequence thoſe prejudices and partialities above-mentioned, how
" comes it that ſuch prejudices and prepoſſeſſions ſhould yet abound?
" And why if it was intended to aid men in the right uſe of their
" natural

" natural reaſon, and leſſening the perverſion and abuſe of it, has " it proved ſo manifeſtly inſufficient for thoſe ends? (p. 47.)"

If a *guide* to men's actions muſt neceſſarily *govern* them too, there might perhaps be ſome weight in the objection; though that would lie equally ſtrong againſt *reaſon*, the deiſt's unerring guide— And in fact ſo long as we admit the free agency of mankind, no argument can be drawn to the prejudice of revelation from the perverſe uſes it is put to. " But yet it is *ſaid*, whoever takes a view " of the Chriſtian world, and beholds the abominable wickedneſs " that has rode triumphant in it, as well in paſt as preſent times, " and obſerves how the Chriſtian religion, and what is called the " Chriſtian revelation, has been made a cover and a pretext to the " moſt baſe and vile deſigns, will ſee the juſtneſs of this reflection, " that if revelation came in aid of reaſon there very much needs " another revelation to be given in aid of both. And though Chriſ- " tians are apt to boaſt of the great benefit that has accrued to man- " kind by the promulgation of the Chriſtian revelation; yet it is " much to be queſtioned whether the poor *Americans* have not too " much reaſon to conſider the coming of Chriſtians, and the Chriſ- " tian religion among them, to have been the greateſt evil " and curſe that ever befel them, and that not only on account of " the millions of people among them who have fallen a ſacrifice to " Chriſtian piety and zeal, but on account of that perfidiouſneſs " and baſeneſs, and that much greater degeneracy of action and af- " fection that has taken place and prevailed among them ſince the " introduction of Chriſtianity (p. 48.)."

As for the bad *methods* taken to eſtabliſh Chriſtianity in *America*, or elſewhere, it is very ſufficient, I imagine, to obſerve, that Chriſtianity itſelf is no more anſwerable for *them*, than *right reaſon* was for the practice

practice among heathens of their offering up their ſons and their daughters unto devils; and conſequently the reflections of the deiſts on this head are as foreign to their purpoſe, as were thoſe practices to which he alludes. There are, as Mr. *Chubb* obſerves, many bad things practiſed by *Chriſtians*, which are not the *natural* produce of Chriſtianity, and are therefore not to be placed to its account. Proceed we then to ſome notable remarks on this truly noble declaration, that "reaſon is the inſeparable as well as peculiar glory of every intelligent being."

"Reaſon, ſays our Deiſt, is the idol the Doctor chooſes to bow "down to." I much wiſh the Deiſt had not offered incenſe to a much worſe. But let us hear what he would ſay upon the point. "If reaſon, ſays he, is the inſeparable as well as peculiar glory of "every intelligent being, then it muſt be a ſufficient guide to every "intelligent being in all momentous affairs;" and then, after ſome of the moſt refined *nothingneſs* I ever read (p. 52.) he draws the following concluſions as deducible from the Doctor's account. 1ſt, "That reaſon is the glory. 2dly, The inſeparable glory; and 3dly, "The peculiar glory of every intelligent being." And how glorioufly he reaſons on theſe ſeparate degrees of glory conferred on human reaſon, will beſt appear from our author's own words in his 53d and 54th pages; which I chuſe to ſubmit to the reader's obſervation*, whilſt I paſs on to another remark on his antagoniſt.

* *Firſt*, If reaſon be the glory of an intelligent being, it is ſo becauſe it is that by which alone he is capable of juſtly arranging his ideas, and perceiving their agreement or diſagreement, and thereby of diſtinguiſhing betwixt truth and falſhood, good and evil, in all thoſe things in which his duty and happineſs are concerned; and conſequently whatever knowledge is uſeful in theſe reſpects, it is only to be obtained by the due uſe of his reaſon or underſtanding. *Secondly*, If reaſon be a glory inſeparable from an intelligent being, it could never, at any time, by any means, much leſs by the tranſgreſſion of any one individual of the ſpecies, have been ſeparated from the

" Reaſon was not deſigned, ſays the Doctor, like our cloaths, " to be put on and off at pleaſure, but it was intended for conſtant " and perpetual uſe; and which we ought to make uſe of, not only " in the affairs of this life, but much more in religious affairs, which " are of the higheſt importance. But alas! alas! ſays our author, " it is a certain, though melancholy truth, though reaſon was not " deſigned, like our cloaths, to be put on and off at pleaſure; yet " that *ſome* of our ſanguine divines, like labourers in ſummer, throw " off their cloaths the better to perform the taſk aſſigned them; " they caſt off their reaſon the better to reproach and *vilify* their " innocent neighbours for not blindly ſubmitting to their duties " (p. 55.)."

Would the deiſts in return but luckily put *on* their reaſon in examining into the grounds of revelation, they neither would have minded nor merited thoſe revilings. And if this great champion in the cauſe of deiſm, whilſt he ſo ſtudiouſly avoided ſplitting on the rock of enthuſiaſm and ſuperſtition, had not ſtruck on the ſands of blaſphemy and prophaneneſs, but ſteered judiciouſly between the two

whole human race, without ſinking the property of intelligence to the ſpecies (which is not pretended) becauſe while any one continues an intelligent being, he muſt continue to be poſſeſſed of every property eſſential to intelligence; and reaſon being ſo ſpecifically eſſential to it (in that higher ſenſe in which Dr. *Benſon* uſes the term intelligence) that a being void of reaſon cannot with any propriety be denominated intelligent: and therefore a being void of reaſon, that is, void of a capacity of raciocination, which will enable him to perceive the connection or repugnance of his own ideas, when under a proper arrangement, and to draw juſt and natural concluſions from their proper premiſſes; ſuch a being cannot be accountable for the uſe or abuſe of a faculty which he has not, nor will God expect the performance of duties proper to intelligent beings at ſuch a one's hands. *Thirdly*, If reaſon be the peculiar glory of every intelligent being, then it muſt be the peculiar glory of the firſt principle of life and intelligence. And hence it evidently follows, that if reaſon be the peculiar glory of the Creator, then it muſt be the peculiar glory of the creature, in the reſpective proportionate degree in which he poſſeſſed it; and that nothing which he is or can be poſſeſſed of beſides, can, abſtractedly conſidered, be equal, much leſs of ſuperior glory to him.

extremes,

extremes, *he* would have made a much ſafer and more reputable paſſage through life. If others have deduced from Chriſtianity doctrines Chriſtianity never meant to eſtabliſh, their weakneſs or wickedneſs be to themſelves. But will that leſſen *his* guilt in not attending with proper deference to the declarations it *really* makes? If God has thought fit to propoſe to our faith a ſyſtem of truths truly rational and becoming, right worthy the Creator to eſtabliſh, and his creatures to embrace and reverence (and be it an unqueſtionable truth that he has not, or the deiſts unqueſtionably throw aſide their reaſon in rejecting revelation) muſt theſe important truths be overlooked, becauſe others perhaps have annexed to them abſurdities and extravagances of their own *framing*? Muſt the original diſpenſation be deſpiſed becauſe it has at times ſuffered the abuſes of prieſtcraft and enthuſiaſm? And what if ſome call it a promulgation of the law of nature, and others, a ſuperadded revelation? What if ſometimes it is one and ſometimes it is the other, which deiſts, with a ſneer, obſerve to be the caſe (p. 55.) what! does this, I would aſk, make revelation not revelation? There is ſomething in brutes that determines them to their *good* unaccountably, which enables them, with great ſagacity, to provide for the ſafety of themſelves and their offſpring. Some call it inſtinct, ſome reaſon, ſome a divine impulſe. Sometimes it is one, and ſometimes it is the other.—But what then? Shall we diſpute the fact, that there is ſomething equivalent to an *intelligent* principle in brutes, becauſe we want a name by which to diſtinguiſh it from the reaſon of *man*? The end in ſhort propoſed by an inſtitution (not the *name* by which it is called, no nor the bad *uſes* to which it is put) will alone determine a rational man to approve or reject it. And if revelation was intended to promote the practice of true religion, it matters not by what particular name you dignify or diſtinguiſh it. It is ſufficient (in negative duty I mean) if you do not diſown, diſhonour, or deride it. But to return—

It has been aſſerted, " that the more the works of creation and " Providence are ſearched into and underſtood, the more they con- " firm the truth of the Chriſtian religion, and add ſuch ſupports " and evidences as could hardly be expected or believed (p. 151.)." Our Deiſt's remark on this aſſertion is ſo very diſingenuous and diſhoneſt, that I ſcarce can have patience to beſtow any notice on it; and yet I know not how, totally, to paſs it over in ſilence.

" If, ſays he, the conſideration of the works of the creation muſt " enable us to draw *ſuch* concluſions from them, as give a proper " proof of the divinity of the doctrine of the *trinity*, the *hypoſtatic* " union, and all ſuch other *ſupernatural* doctrines and precepts, as " conſtitute the Chriſtian religion, properly ſo called, it can work " wonders indeed; to which, ſays he, I may add the doctrine of " *tranſubſtantiation*, the truth and divinity of which is as prove- " able from the works of creation as the others. And if rea- " ſon is ſufficient for theſe things, then what is it not ſufficient " for? (p. 58.)."

If the Deiſt had been ſo juſt to his antagoniſt as to have given his words a fair introduction, and not disjoined them from the main argument he was upon, the inference he has drawn from them would have been too glaringly inconcluſive for the moſt haſty reader not to take notice of it; ſo that he very modeſtly waves doing the former, the better to diſguiſe his cunning craftineſs in the latter.

" Dr. *Benſon* having previouſly obſerved, that thoſe profound " ſearches into the cauſe of things, and the formation of the world, " made by ſuch great men as Dr. *Clark*, Dr. *Derham*, and Mr. " *Ray*, &c. had added ſtrength to the more common arguments " brought in ſupport of religion, adds—that the more the works

" of

" of creation and Providence are ſearched into and underſtood,
" the more they confirm the truth of the Chriſtian religion; and
" add ſuch ſupports and evidences as could hardly be expected or
" believed. If ſo, ſays our author, they muſt neceſſarily prove
" the doctrine of the *trinity*, *hypoſtatic union*, *tranſubſtantiation*, or
" the like; and if reaſon is ſufficient for theſe things, what is it
" not ſufficient for?"

Why, it is not ſufficient to make a man *honeſt* who is *determined* to be a knave. Excuſe the warmth of the reply, to which I am provoked by our author's ſcandalous ſubterfuge. The Doctor's deſign, in the paſſages above quoted, was, to ſhew how learned men had fully anſwered objections and difficulties ſtarted by unbelievers; " by leading them into arguments of a more abſtract
" ſpeculative kind; ſuch as the creation of the world, the eternal
" fitneſs of things, moral differences of actions, moral obliga-
" tions, and the like, the former of which being more diſtinct-
" ly explained and expatiated on by the help of revelation, and
" the latter ſhewn ſo entirely to coincide with the end of
" Chriſt's coming, ſerved, as he very juſtly apprehended, to fur-
" niſh out ſuch additional ſupports for the truths of Chriſtianity,
" as could hardly have been imagined by men not attentive to
" ſuch reflections." How our author therefore can be juſtified in his laboured *concluſion* from the above paſſages concerning the doctrine of the *trinity*, the *hypoſtatic* union, or the like, I leave only to common ſenſe and common *honeſty* to determine.

In page 59, our author quotes as follows, from his antagoniſt.
" As the Goſpel, ſays the Doctor, (p. 233.) was a matter of pure
" revelation, St. *Paul* was in the right of it not to mix his hu-
" man learning with it; but faithfully to preach the Goſpel in
" that purity and ſimplicity in which he had received it from

" Chriſt. Our Deiſt's concluſion from theſe words is, that na-
" tural philoſophy or human learning cannot be exerciſed about
" it without corrupting and defiling it; and that therefore the
" Doctor had gone beyond himſelf, and has carried the matter too
" far (p. *ibid.*)."

Whether his antagoniſt or our Deiſt is guilty of the miſtake of going beyond himſelf, and carrying the matter too far, I will appeal to the judgment of the reader on what follows. " If, ſays
" our Deiſt, reaſon is capable of drawing ſuch concluſions from
" the works of creation and Providence in favour of Chriſtianity
" as aforeſaid, then St. *Paul*, not uſing it to anſwer that purpoſe,
" muſt render him not commendable, but on the contrary greatly
" blameable, For when he went from place to place preaching
" the Goſpel at *Theſſalonica*, at *Berea*, and elſewhere, nothing
" could have been more proper, nor was better adapted to an-
" ſwer the purpoſe of his miniſtry, *viz.* the working conviction
" and the converſion of his hearers, than for him to have exem-
" plified his human wiſdom and ſkill in natural philoſophy, by
" drawing thoſe concluſions and thereby producing thoſe evi-
" dences from the works of creation and Providence as proved the
" truth and divinity of what he exhibited to his reſpective evi-
" dences (p. 60, 61.)."

If our author had not ſtopt ſhort in his quotation from his antagoniſt, he could have found no reaſon for this objection; it being moſt ſolidly obviated by the Doctor's own words immediately ſubjoined. " As the Goſpel, ſays the Doctor, was a mat-
" ter of pure revelation, St. *Paul* was in the right of it not to
" mix his human learning with it, *&c.* *For*, when he could
" work miracles, and enable others to work miracles, he had a
" much ſhorter and more effectual method of making converts
" and

" and eſtabliſhing them in the faith, than from any thing he " had learned in the ſchool of *Tarſus*, or at the feet of *Gama-* " *liel* in *Jeruſalem*. In renouncing his *human* learning, he did " not renounce common ſenſe. But human learning could be " of no ſervice to an Apoſtle to make him maſter of the Goſ- " pel, or to enable him to work miracles, though it may be of " great ſervice to *us* if it be made right uſe of (p. 234.)

The Apoſtles, ſays Dr. *Benſon* again (p. 221.) " took quite " another method to prove the truth of Chriſtianity. They did " indeed make their appeals to *men*'s underſtanding, but in a " different way from modern apologiſts—being endued with " readier and more deciſive means of conviction, more ſuitable " to the apoſtolic character, to the bulk of mankind, and to " their own neceſſary courſe of diſpatch. They grounded Chriſ- " tianity upon facts, they wrought miracles before the faces of " their hearers, in proof of a divine commiſſion; and then con- " ferred upon the converts miraculous powers; theſe were im- " mediate appeals to men's ſenſes, and what the loweſt of the " people could judge of, and reaſon from." What is this but " dealing with mankind ſuitably to their intelligent nature? (of which deiſts affect to urge the neceſſity, p. 61.) What is this but making " an appeal to their underſtanding, requiring their aſ- " ſent in a proper way, and binding them with the cords of a " man? (p. *ib.*)."

But again, Dr. *Benſon* ſays (p. 27.) " Are not theſe moral vir- " tues (which are the *principal* things in Chriſtianity) the very " things which all true philoſophers have ever attempted to re- " commend? Can any thing be more worthy of God, than giv- " ing men ſuch a revelation, when men had confeſſedly corrupted

" them-

" themſelves, and that to ſuch a degree, that not only reaſon " or the light of nature was altogether unlikely to reſtore true " piety, but even that light itſelf, as *Tully* expreſſly acknow- " ledged, did no where appear." And then it being urged by the author of Chriſtianity, whom he was then anſwering, that when Chriſtianity appeared, it was an enquiring age, he anſwers (p. 134.) " Suppoſe we allow it, as we readily do? What then? " What would he infer from that? The Goſpel ſpread in that " enquiring age, when, as he aſſerts, reaſon was in the higheſt " requeſt and reputation, and ſpread with moſt amazing ſwift- " neſs."

Now comes the moſt bare-faced miſrepreſentation of a man's argument, that a writer can become capable of exhibiting. " The " Doctor, ſays our Deiſt, has averred, that the Goſpel is a mat- " ter of pure revelation, and alſo, that the principal things in " Chriſtianity are the very things which all true philoſophy has " ever attempted to recommend. Again he informs us, that the " world was in that profound darkneſs, when Chriſtianity firſt " made its appearance in it, that reaſon or the light of nature " did no where appear; and yet he informs us, it every where " ſhone forth in that remarkably happy age, with ſuch re- " ſplendency and luſtre, that reaſon was in the higheſt re- " queſt and reputation." Good God, ſays he, is ſuch confuſion poſſible!

Such a heavy charge of confuſion and contradiction, ſo *confidently* brought by the Deiſt againſt Dr. *Benſon*, was, I doubt not, greedily ſwallowed by all the admirers of the former, and ſerved to exalt beyond the reach of ſuſpicion and miſgivings, his moſt profound ſagacity and penetration.

And

And yet what more or leſs does it amount to, than a freſh diſplay of his uſual dexterity in the exerciſe of his profeſſion, as a dealer in ſophiſtry and miſquotations, which he artfully gilds over with a few gewgaw expreſſions, in order to dazzle the eyes, whilſt he is playing upon and miſleading the *underſtanding* of his readers. He cannot perceive how the Goſpel can be a pure revelation, and yet contain things which every philoſopher has attempted to recommend! Had it been ſaid, that the Goſpel contains thoſe things *only*, which every philoſopher attempts to recommend, there might, perhaps, have been ſome foundation for our author's critical diſſatisfaction and aſtoniſhment.

But what if, beſide thoſe duties of Chriſtianity, which Chriſtians and philoſophers have *united* in recommending, there are ſome *ſuperadded* duties more eſpecially to be regarded, as motives to the practice of the *moral* precepts, which are the *principal* objects of every divine inſtitution? Had the Deiſt vouchſafed to have interpreted the Doctor in this fair, intelligible and rational ſenſe, he might, in ſome degree, have ſaved his own reputation as a reaſoner, whilſt he is thus fruitleſly endeavouring to pull down the *envied* merit of Dr. *Benſon*.

But hold, ſay you,—your friend the Doctor is not to get cleared from the charge of abſurdity and confuſion ſo eaſily as you imagine. For, ſays our author, *he* informs us, that the world was in that profound ignorance, when Chriſtianity firſt made its appearance in it, that reaſon or the light of nature did no where *appear*; and yet *he* informs us, that it every where ſhone, *&c.* He! Who? What the Doctor? Why truly, no.—

But

But the Deiſt finding that the Doctor could not become abſurd of himſelf, and without *his* aſſiſtance, very charitably helps him out with a few words of his own, ſo artfully ſlided in, that he imagined (ſuch being the high compliment he would pay to the *underſtanding* of his admirers) they might eaſily paſs for the Doctor's own words.

If you refer to the Doctor in p. 134, you will find he is only arguing from *this* conceſſion, which for argument ſake he had a mind to allow the *author of Chriſtianity not founded*, &c. *viz.* That when Chriſtianity firſt appeared, it was an enquiring age. And what, ſays the Doctor, would *he* infer from that conceſſion? The Goſpel ſpread in that enquiring age, when, as *he* inſerts, (who aſſerts? Does the Doctor aſſert it? Is *he* not evidently talking of the aſſertion of the author of Chriſtianity not founded, *&c.*—Shameful!) reaſon was in the higheſt requeſt and reputation, though he before had declared, it did no where appear. Is ſuch a groundleſs *charge* of confuſion in an antagoniſt *poſſible!* Is it poſſible, in ſhort, that a man can boaſt being actuated by the *religion of reaſon and nature*, and be ſo ſhamefully deficient in moral *honeſty* in his writings? Or is it poſſible, that *you*, my friend, ſhould ſacrifice your reaſon to an implicit faith in ſo preſumptuous, ſo prevaricating a *dictator?* But to proceed—

In anſwer to an obſervation, that reaſon is of conſtant and perpetual uſe in all things concerning Chriſtianity in particular, our author aſks, "Where is the man that durſt, on the prin-
"ciples of pure reaſon, attempt to prove, ſo as to convince
"the underſtanding of another man, that an unoriginated, un-
"compounded, immaterial, and pure ſpirit, ſhould, *like* one of
"the

" the derived, compounded, material, human ſpecies, have a " ſon?"

And I in return aſk, where is the Chriſtian, *&c.* that believes or would eſtabliſh ſuch a doctrine?—*viz.* that ſuch an unoriginated, *&c.* being, has a *ſon like*, or begotten after the manner of one of the derived, compounded, material, human ſpecies? I would gladly know from what corner of the world, from what ſynod, or council, or eſtabliſhed creed, has our Deiſt picked up that ſecret? Into what *Creed-monger*'s cabinet council has he been admitted?

But I will not enlarge on this point, till I have conſidered another charge brought againſt the Doctor as a *trifler*. " When " ſome of thoſe doctrines that are peculiarly Chriſtian were " brought on the carpet, and it became the Doctor's preſent " buſineſs in his anſwer to the author of Chriſtianity not found- " ed on argument, to ſhew or prove them to be all reaſon- " able, he inſtead of that only aſks, ſays our Author, are not " all theſe things highly reaſonable? and there he ſtops ſhort " with this excuſe—he forebore to enlarge, for fear he ſhould " ſeem tedious, which his not having done, proves that his " book is all waſte paper (p. 66.)."—ſo that in order to avoid waſting pen, ink, and paper, you muſt, it ſeems, trifle with your readers all you can—muſt amuſe them at all events, though it be even with words no ways *neceſſary* to the purpoſe.

The point upon which our author thinks the Doctor *ought* to have *enlarged*, he thinks not at all to his *purpoſe*; but *becauſe* he has not ſo done, all he has wrote on that head is waſte paper. This is a concluſion which our Deiſt had an eye to as of

conſequence, I preſume, to himſelf; well conſidering that if talking not at all to the purpoſe would preſerve a book from the ſcurvy fate of waſte paper, his own famous work would ſtand as fair a chance for immortality as any book whatſoever. But the argument againſt the Doctor is—that when he aſked whether all the doctrines of revelation were not reaſonable, he did not take upon him to prove to our *Deiſts* that they *were* ſo.

The internal evidences of the truth of Chriſtianity are theſe, ſays the Doctor (p. 21, 22.) *viz.* "*that both the doctrines and precepts* " of Chriſtianity (if we take the ſcriptural account of them) are " highly wiſe and reaſonable." Let our Deiſt, if he can, prove the contrary.

Not to waſte, however, yours or my own time any longer upon the wretched cavillings of ſo trifling an advocate for the *religion of reaſon and nature*,—*ſophiſtry*, not *reaſoning*, being his talent, I ſhall take my leave of him, little or nothing more occurring in the ſubſequent pages in his pamphlet, than a very laboured endeavour to prove, that if the *Koran* is *falſe*, the *Goſpel of Chriſt* cannot be proved *true*, without ſubjecting the Deity to an impeachment of *partiality* towards his creatures, inconſiſtent with our ideas of infinite rectitude *.

I cannot, however, diſmiſs our Deiſt, without making two obſervations, to which I beg your attention: in the *firſt*

* Vid. from p. 80, to 90.

place,

place, that the *deriſions* with which theſe deiſts treat the Chriſtian diſpenſation, are ſo many concurrent completions of that expreſs Scripture prophecy—that there *ſhould be mockers in the laſt days,—denying the Lord Jeſus that bought them*;—— but that *ſecondly*, it is reaſonable to conclude, that they will ſhare the fate of thoſe, of whom the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks—*He that dwelleth in Heaven, ſhall laugh them to ſcorn, the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion.*

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.

FINIS.

A
LAPSE
OF
HUMAN SOULS
IN A
STATE of PRE-EXISTENCE,
THE
ONLY ORIGINAL SIN,
AND THE
GROUND WORK of the GOSPEL DISPENSATION.

——Make not impoſſible
That which but ſeems unlike. SHAKESPEARE.

A

TREATISE

OF

HUMAN SOULS;

STATE OF PRE-EXISTENCE,

THE

ONLY ORIGINAL SIN,

AND THE

Gradual Work of the GOSPEL DISPENSATION.

——Make not thyself
That which God will for your welfare. SHAKESPEARE.

THE PREFACE.

NOTHING has contributed ſo much to the increaſe of infidelity as a continued miſrepreſentation of ſome of the principal doctrines of Chriſtianity, that fundamental article of it in particular, the redemption of man by Jeſus Chriſt. Was *that* placed in its proper point of view, our religion would be able to ſtand the teſt of a rational examination; men of genius and ſpeculation, without exception, would be then led to contemplate it with due reverence.

When on the contrary it is ſuppoſed to be founded on an hypotheſis which reflects upon the Deity—when it is ſaid that we come into the world objects of the divine wrath on account of a guilt not contracted by *ourſelves*, but tranſmitted to us from Adam's treſpaſs in Paradiſe, and that nothing leſs than the blood of

the bleſſed Jeſus was ſufficient to atone for that *derived* offence, can we wonder that revelation and its adherents become the deriſion of the *free-thinker*? And can any thing be more eſſentially ſerviceable to the cauſe of Chriſtianity, than an enquiry whether there is in fact any foundation either in reaſon or revelation for ſuch an hypotheſis; whether thoſe paſſages in Scripture, which are uſually urged in its ſupport, advance in reality the extraordinary doctrine; and whether the redemption ſcheme, inſtead of its being founded on a ſuppoſed guilt derived from Adam, may not more reaſonably be conſidered as grounded on a lapſe of human ſouls in a ſtate of pre-exiſtence.—That the latter has at leaſt probability in its favour, every one will confeſs, who has courage enough to throw off the ſhackles of prejudice, and aſſert a freedom and independency of thought and reflection worthy the man and the Chriſtian. From a view of that fundamental article of our faith in the light in which it is uſually placed, it is, that ſo many writers aim to reaſon away the *eſſence* of Chriſtianity, and reduce it to a mere ſyſtem of morality. And indeed among all the errors of the church of Rome, from which we pride ourſelves in having cleared Chriſtianity, there is not one ſo abhorrent to reaſon and reflection as is the doctrine here oppoſed, and which I will for

ever

ever oppoſe, till a new ſyſtem of attributes is formed, by which I am to frame my conceptions of the Divine Being.

How incumbent is it therefore upon every one, each *teacher* of Chriſtianity in particular, as he values the credit, and would contribute to the ſucceſs of the Goſpel, to clear the ſacred pages from the charge of advancing a doctrine upon which *reaſon* cannot reflect but with horror? This only can enable divines to convince unbelievers, that Chriſtianity is in reality *founded on argument*; then, and not till then, ſhall *we* be able to give *faith* an aſcendancy in the realm of *reaſon*. And had this been done before, the *Tindals*, *Collins*'s, *Woollaſtons*, *Chubbs*, *Bolingbrokes*, would not have had ſo fair a mark at which to direct ſo plentifully (and with ſuch aſſured ſucceſs) their *arrows*—even *bitter words*.

The chevalier Ramſay, in ſpeaking of the ſuppoſed guilt derived from Adam, adds---" Atrocious maxim, that ſullies all the conduct of Providence, and that ſhocks the underſtanding of the moſt intelligent *children* of all nations! The anſwers ordinarily made to them, throw into their tender minds the ſeeds of a latent incredulity, and of this I could give many fatal examples, if this were the proper place for it. I ſhall content

myſelf

myſelf with one. A great Prince, ſays he, of a neighbouring nation, equally admired for his ſuperior genius, univerſal learning, and ſurpriſing talents in political and military affairs, but who lived and died in the moſt obſtinate incredulity, being one day aſked, after a long, ſerious, and familiar converſation with a friend, what had inſpired him with ſuch invincible prejudices againſt revealed religion; he anſwered, he had imbibed them early, yea, even from his childhood when he learned his catechiſm. He ſaid his preceptor having entertained him a long time with the ſtory of the forbidden fruit, and the *imputation of Adam's ſin to all his poſterity*, he aſked how a good *God* could condemn all the human race for the fault of one man, in whoſe crime they had never co-operated, and whoſe perſon they had never ſeen? The tutor embarraſſed, made him the common childiſh anſwer of the ſchoolmen. Theſe inſipid replies augmenting rather than diminiſhing the difficulties, my tender mind, continued the Prince, was ſtruck with horror upon every new repetition of that inſipid ſtuff. As I grew up, this ſacred horror changed by degrees into a ſhrewd ſuſpicion, and turned at laſt into total contempt of a religion that was founded on ſuch a blaſphemous tenet. The ſame Prince added, that, puſhed by his general curioſity for ſciences of all kind, he had looked into the ſcholaſtic theology, and that he had

never

never found any book ſo proper to nouriſh in him *deiſm and incredulity*, as the account they give of religion. And I defy any man to read, ſays Ramſay, our vulgar catechiſms on this point, with a ſprightly ſmart ſchool boy, and hint to him its abſurdity, without the child's being ſtruck with the ſame impreſſions as the great Prince mentioned." But to return——

As the ſubject matter of this performance is of the utmoſt conſequence, I would not have the female part of the world, or the unlearned of our ſex be diſcouraged from an attention to it, by an appearance of a little Greek and Latin, which they may, as oft as either occurs, paſs over, without loſing the thread of reaſoning; nor would I have them imagine that it contains matters of enquiry, of which it is above the reach of their abilities to form an adequate conception, and in which they have no concern. No. Though *hypothetical*, in ſome degree, my ſentiments, yet are they not above the inveſtigation of *reaſon*. And I will take upon me to aſſure the impartial in general, that a view of Chriſtianity through the medium of a lapſe of ſouls in a ſtate of pre-exiſtence, will enlarge their ideas of its importance, and inflame their ſouls with an increaſing zeal for its honor and intereſt. And if among thoſe who call themſelves Chriſtians there are

even

even any who can view with an eye of *unconcernedneſs* the ridicule to which Chriſtianity ſtands expoſed (inſtead of intereſting themſelves as they ought in removing the cauſe) in what other light are they to be conſidered than as deſerters of their Lord and maſter? I will however hope, that there are among thoſe under whoſe cognizance matters of religion more immediately fall, many equally eminent in ſtation as in abilities, by whom I may at laſt be ſeconded in this endeavour *more effectually* to convince unbelievers that we are able in reality *to give a reaſon of the hope that is in us.*

And I wiſh that all thoſe who move in an exalted ſphere of life would revolve in their minds this one too little regarded truth, viz. that if that, *whatever* it is, which raiſes them to *dignity*, *pre-eminence* and *importance* here, operates not to the intereſt of that plan of Providence, to which Chriſtianity calls their attention, it, inſtead of exalting, debaſes them in the eye of him, whoſe kingdom is *not of this world*, and gives them poſſeſſion only of a falſe, flattering, and if I may be allowed ſo to ſpeak, *fatal* felicity.

INTRO-

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. THAT human ſouls are of coeval origin with the angelic hoſt, and both the production of one inſtantaneous exertion of infinite power, the two following conſiderations do, I think, plainly evince. No reaſon, in the firſt place, can be aſſigned why the Deity ſhould give the preference implied in a priority of creation to this or that order of intelligent natures, rather than to another: and in the ſecond place, a *ſucceſſive traduction* of ſouls, or a *daily creation* of them (one or other of which muſt elſe be ſuppoſed) is the one an actual impoſibility in nature, and the other a ſuppoſition, which conveys an idea of the Creator, than which there cannot be one more groſs and unworthy *.

A reflection this, to which the reader will give, I hope, the due attention, and not forget that it is an inference which *unavoidably* follows

* A ſucceſſive traduction of ſouls is, as Dr. Henry More obſerves, "A plain contradiction to the notion of a ſoul, which is a ſpirit, and therefore of an indiviſible, "that is, of an indiſcerpible eſſence. And a daily creation of them implies both "an indignity to the majeſty of God (in making him the chiefeſt aſſiſtant and actor "in the higheſt, freeſt, and moſt particular way in which the Divinity can be conceived to act, in thoſe abominable crimes of whoredom, adultery, and inceſt, by "ſupplying thoſe foul coitions with new-created ſouls for the purpoſe) and alſo an "injury to the ſouls themſelves; that they being ever thus created by the immediate hand of God, and therefore pure, innocent, and immaculate, ſhould be "impri-

follows from a ſuppoſed *daily* creation of ſouls—How much more conſentaneous to reaſon therefore, is it to conclude, agreeably to the ſentiments of the moſt rational philoſophers, that *all* ſouls were created from the beginning of things, by one Almighty Fiat, and that ſome of them having ſinned in their firſt ſtate, (the *probability*, if not actual certainty of which, is demonſtrable from *reaſon* and Scripture) were detruded from their *celeſtial* abode into an *aerial* one; from whence, having acquired a vital congruity with matter duly prepared for the reception of ſuch of the fallen powers as ſhall be deemed worthy to enter into *this* probationary ſcene of action, ſucceſſively drop *of courſe* (or rather Providentiæ ſive Animæ Mundi Lege) into a terreſtrial habitation. By the *aerial abode*, however, mentioned above I do not mean that *purer* region to which the ſoul will aſcend, if properly *purified* here, when ſeparated from the body——but that groſs circumambient atmoſphere of the earth, where dwell the *chief* of the apoſtate powers; with whom a more *refined*, or rather a leſs *corrupt* order of lapſed beings may as reaſonably be ſuppoſed to cohabit, as good and bad *men* be intermixed with each other, and *both* with furious beaſts and other noxious animals in this, their terreſtrial habitation.

§ 2. That the *Moſaic* was not the *original creation of all things*, but that prior to it there exiſted an univerſe of rational beings, all

" impriſoned in unclean, diſeaſed, and diſordered bodies, where very many of them " ſeem to be ſo fatally over-maſtered, and in ſuch an utter incapacity of cloſing " with what is good and virtuous, that they muſt needs be adjudged to that ex- " treme calamity, which attends all thoſe that forget God." See Dr. More's Immortality of the Soul, p. 113.

See alſo Glanville's Lux Orientalis; where the above arguments are expatiated upon in a moſt comprehenſive and maſterly manner.

but

but men of the moſt contracted ſentiments will readily enough conceive*.

* It is the opinion of the generality of writers, who look no farther than to the letter of the Moſaic hiſtory, that the whole frame of nature comes within the compaſs of the ſix days creation; that not only the ſun, moon, and planets, but the immenſe ſyſtem of the fixed ſtars, are there deſcribed as coeval with the formation of our earth: conſequently they muſt hold, that till about ſix thouſand years ago, the Deity exiſted alone, reigning over an abſolute void without either worlds or inhabitants. But as the contrary opinion may be fairly deduced from many paſſages in Scripture, ſo it is much more agreeable to our juſteſt apprehenſions of the Divine nature to ſuppoſe, that the fountain of power and goodneſs had created worlds, and communicated being to many orders of creatures long before our earth or its inhabitants had an exiſtence. See Jameſon, Pref. to his Expoſit. of the Pentat. Again—By the Heaven, ſays Mr. Jackſon, on Gen. i. 1.—"In the beginning God created the Heaven and the earth"—we are to underſtand the ſeveral ſyſtems of the ſun, moon, and planets, which were created before the formation of the earth, of which only Moſes gives a particular account, and to which his hiſtory primarily belongs. It is ſaid, "God made two great lights," viz. the ſun and the moon; and it is certain that the earth was, by God's almighty power, ſo ſituated, with reſpect to the poſition of the ſun and moon, that they might have their proper influence over it, and ſo with propriety be ſaid to have been new made to rule over its day and night. They now became properly a ſun and moon to the earth, whether they were then created, when they firſt ſhone upon it, or before.

The Hebrew word עשה Aſa, or Aſe, rendered to make, ſignifies alſo to conſtitute, or appoint, or prepare; and ſo it may mean, that God appointed two great lights, the one to rule over the day, the other to rule over the night. And it is evident, that the word may be taken in the preterpluperfect tenſe, as it is in the 31ſt verſe, where it is rightly rendered, "and God ſaw every thing that he had made."—Therefore, though it is undoubtedly true, that God made or created the ſun, moon, and ſtars, yet there is no need to underſtand that they are any part of the Moſaic creation, which comprehended only the heavens and the earth, or the earth with its firmament or atmoſphere, which is called Heaven. See Jackſon's Chronol. Antiq. p. 4, 5.

Agreeably to which, our learned and ingenious Brockleſby had before obſerved, that the original creation was ante-Moſaical; that the Moſaical Coſmopœia was not God's *original* creation, nor the creation of the *vaſt univerſe* of *rationals*, but a *ſecondary* creation, a creation of our *terreſtrial ſyſtem* only; and that our planetary globe, though in reſpect of the matter of it, it was a part of God's original creation, yet as formed and inhabited, did not belong to the original conſtitution of the univerſe. See Brockleſby's Chriſtian Trinity, p. 493, &c. The truth of which hypotheſis he ſupports by a variety of cogent arguments—ſome of which may occaſionally come in perhaps hereafter.

§ 3. And as every part of the creation muſt, when iſſuing firſt from the hands of the Creator, be *perfect* in its *kind* (the fountain being pure, the ſtreams flowing from it muſt be pure alſo) it neceſſarily follows, that the whole race of *rationals* came into exiſtence poſſeſſed of as large a ſhare of intellectual purity and moral rectitude, as *finite* natures can be ſuppoſed capable of enjoying, or *infinite* power could beſtow. But from the very ſtate and circumſtances of their exiſtence, and that *freedom of will* which conſtituted them *moral agents*, it is eaſy, and even neceſſary to conceive, that though *pure* and *perfect* in their *kind*, they were nevertheleſs *peccable*, and liable to *tranſgreſſion* *. It is an aſſertion of *Calvin*, that the holy angels themſelves are not uncriminal and uncondemnable; they are, "non *ſatis juſti*," not ſufficiently or completely *juſt* and *righteous*.

* "Unleſs a man, ſays Dr. Cheyne, gives up all reaſon, philoſophy, and proportion, as well as analogy, and runs into downright ſcepticiſm, blind fate, witchcraft, and enchantment, he muſt ſuppoſe, that an infinitely wiſe and beneficent being could not have created free and intelligent creatures but for ſome wiſe end and purpoſe. And to obtain this end he muſt have made them at firſt ſound (ſo he is pleaſed to expreſs himſelf) in body and mind. How error, diſeaſes, miſery, and death commenced, may readily be accounted for from the abuſe of freedom and liberty, ſpurious ſelf-love, and an inordinate love of the creature." See Cheyne, Diſcourſe iv. p. 119.

An argument equally concluſive as to angels and men.

There is ſomething extremely rational and ſatisfactory, as to this point, in what follows from Dr. Jenkin.

"It muſt be conſidered, ſays he, that no created being can, in its own nature, be incapable of ſin or default: becauſe it cannot be infinitely perfect; for it is inſeparable from all creatures to have but finite perfections: and whatever has bounds ſet to its perfections is in ſome reſpect imperfect; that is, it wants thoſe perfections which a being of infinite perfections alone can have. So that imperfection is implied in the very eſſence of created beings; and what is imperfect may make default." Jenkin's Reaſon. of Chr. Rel. vol. ii. p. 238.

And again, p. 246, he ſays, "In the beginning God created every thing perfect in its kind, and endued the angels and men with all intellectual and moral perfections ſuitable to their reſpective natures; but ſo as to leave them capable of ſinning. For it pleaſed the infinite wiſdom of God to place them in a ſtate of trial, and to put it to their own choice whether they would ſtand in that condition

teous. " The ſtars are not pure in God's ſight, ſays Job, c. xxv. v. 5. And *abſolute impeccability* is, perhaps, the prerogative of *God* only.

§ 4. Accordingly *Scripture* informs us, that an order of celeſtial powers incurred in proceſs of time their Maker's diſpleaſure, by not keeping their *firſt eſtate*,—by leaving their *habitations*—But of this, more in due time.

" dition of innocence and happineſs in which they were created, or fall into ſin " and miſery. We have little or no account in the Scriptures of the cauſe or " temptation which occaſioned the fall of angels, becauſe it doth not concern us," (concern us! It does concern us more than he imagined) " to be acquainted " with it; and therefore it little becomes us to be inquiſitive about it." (ſcarce any thing concerns us more, or merits a more diligent and earneſt enquiry.) But to proceed with our note—" Indeed it is very difficult to conceive, how beings of " ſuch great knowledge and purity, as the fallen angels once were of, ſhould fall " into ſin: but it is to be conſidered that nothing is more unaccountable, than the " motives and cauſes of action in free agents: when any being is at liberty to do as " it will, no other reaſon of his actings beſides his own will need be enquired after. " But how perfect and excellent ſoever any creature is, unleſs it be ſo confirmed " and eſtabliſhed in a ſtate of purity and holineſs, as to be ſecured from all poſſi- " bility of ſinning, it may be ſuppoſed to admire itſelf, and dote upon its own " perfections and excellencies, and by degrees to neglect and not acknowledge God " the author of them, but to ſin and rebel againſt him. And it is moſt agreeable " both to Scripture and reaſon, that pride was the cauſe of the fall of angels." Jenk. vol. ii. p. 246, 247.

Whether this be or be not juſt reaſoning upon a matter of fact, as to the motives or cauſes from whence it happened, it is quite unneceſſary for me to enquire at preſent.

A Lapſe

A

Lapſe of Human Souls

IN A

STATE of PRE-EXISTENCE, &c.

CHAP. I.

A pre-exiſtence of human ſouls, the belief of the moſt learned among the antient philoſophers.

THE doctrine of a pre-exiſtence of human ſouls took root in the earlieſt ages of the world, flouriſhed among men moſt eminent for learning, ſpeculation, and philoſophic reaſoning, and became a principal branch of heathen theology. It ſpread not only among the Gymnoſophiſts and others moſt renowned for wiſdom in that nurſery of ſciences, Egypt, but among the Bramins of India, and the Magi of Babylon and Perſia. It made a part of the cabala

cabala of the Jews, which is uſually aſcribed to Moſes, and was a reigning hypotheſis among the following illuſtrious philoſophers—Zoroaſter, Pythagoras, Epicharmus, Empedocles, Cebes, Euripides, Plato, Euclid, Philo, Virgil, Marcus Cicero, Plotinus, Jamblicus, Proclus, Boethius, Pſellus, and others*.

Quotations from thoſe authors would, upon the whole, appear too dry and unentertaining to my readers in general, and exceed, at the ſame time, the limits preſcribed to this diſſertation——ſo uſeleſs a parade of reading therefore will, I preſume, be eaſily excuſed, eſpecially as it would retard an enquiry far more material, *viz.* from what paſſages in *holy writ* the doctrine ſeems reducible?

* Vid. Dr. Henry More.—The reader may find not a *little* in favour of this doctrine in the writings of Plato. And I wonder Dr. More ſhould have omitted to rank in his liſt of authorities the ſpeculative Socrates, when, in that ſolemn diſcourſe with his friends, at the cloſe of which he took the cup of poiſon, he forced from Simias the following declaration—"By the moſt beautiful chain of reaſoning we are conſtrained, ſays he, to confeſs, that our ſouls, and that within to which we owe our ideas of what is good and beautiful, exiſted *before we were born.*"—Πριν γενεσθαι ημας. Plato's Phœdo.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

A pre-exiſtence of human ſouls deducible from ſome paſſages in holy writ.

§ 1. MANY paſſages in holy writ, which to the impartial eye are plainly alluſive to a pre-exiſtence of human ſouls, if not poſitively declarative of it, have been manifeſtly perverted by misjudging interpreters into a meaning quite foreign to the real truth. Among which are in particular, what follow—Firſt, God having queſtioned Job about the nature and place of light, ſays, according to *our* tranſlation of the paſſage, which is an erroneous one—*Knoweſt thou it becauſe thou wert born, or becauſe the number of thy days is great?* Job, c. xxxviii. 2.

The meaning of which paſſage ſome underſtand to be this—"Thou wert not ſo much as born, when I ſet a diſtinction between day and night, between light and darkneſs. Thy day had not then commenced. How then canſt thou certainly know what was done before thou wert born?"

Others again interpret the words thus—"Thou knoweſt it *for* thou wert then born, and for that the number of thy years ſhould be great."

Similar to this, and what I take to be the true one is, the interpretation which Junius and Tremellius put upon the paſſage. Noveris te jam tum natum fuiſſe & numero dies tuos eſſe multos---"Know

thou, or I would have *thee to know*, that thou waſt then born, or *in being*, and that in number thy days are many."

§ 2. Again. David's declaration, that he was a *ſtranger* and a *ſojourner* here, is a plain indication that he did not conſider *this* as his *firſt* abode; but as an habitation in which, as a *foreigner* baniſhed from his *native* country, he was doomed to ſojourn for a time---to ſojourn, as our *Bible* tranſlation words it, in Meſeck, and to have his habitation among the tents of Kedar *. And does not his praying to God to *renew* a right ſpirit within him, plainly intimate a conſciouſneſs of a *prior forfeiture* of that right ſpirit?

§ 3. Another place in ſcripture declarative altogether, I think, of the doctrine under conſideration, is that ſaying of God to Jeremiah, *Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee, and before thou cameſt out of the womb I gave thee wiſdom*, c. i. 5.

This paſſage, agreeably to the opinion of moſt commentators, contains nothing more than God's declaration to the prophet *Jeremiah*, that, before his entrance into the womb, he had fore-ordained him to the office to which he was then called. In like manner as *Joſias*, *Cyrus*, *John the Baptiſt*, &c. were co-operative inſtruments fore-ordained by God for the better carrying on the Goſpel diſpenſation. But why muſt we neceſſarily ſuppoſe that all theſe were in *non-entity* at the time they were pre-ordained

* But Meſeck, according to the Septuagint, and other Greek interpreters, is not to be conſidered *here* as a proper name of place or perſon, but as a verb, ſignifying *length of time*, and that therefore the paſſage ſhould be rendered thus—Woe is me, that my ſojourning in a ſtrange land is prolonged!—Ουαι μοι οτι η παροικεια μου ημακρυνθη. Though there are a people in Arabia called *Meſeck*, yet it is certain that David was never an inhabitant among *them*.

to

to their ſeparate offices? Or rather, why ſhould we not conclude the very reverſe from even that very emphatical expreſſion, I *knew* thee *?

§ 4. Another paſſage to the point is our Saviour's earneſt ejaculation to his Father before his paſſion, John xviii. 5.

And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own glory, with the glory *which I had with thee* before the world was; which neceſſarily reſpects his *ſubordinate nature* and *glory*—his *ſupreme glorification* could *never* have departed from him.

§ 5. To the above may be added the anſwer which the diſciples gave to our Saviour's enquiry, whom men ſaid that he was---Some ſay, that thou art *John* the *Baptiſt*, ſome *Elias* or one of the prophets---A ſufficient demonſtration this, that a deſcent of the human ſpecies upon earth, from a *prior ſtate*, was a prevailing opinion among the Jews at that time, in which it ſhould ſeem our Saviour acquieſced by his only aſking them in return---*But whom ſay* ye *that I am?*

§ 6. And the ſame obſervation may be made upon that queſtion put to our Saviour concerning the blind man: *Maſter, was it for this man's ſin or his parents that he was born blind?*——A queſtion which our Saviour did not, we find, take upon him to reprove, which undoubtedly he would have done, had it ſeemed to him to favour a doctrine falſe and frivolous. Our Saviour's

* *Agnovi* te, I *knew* thee, as it is rendered by Junius and Tremellius, which grammarians ſuppoſe to be, generally ſpeaking, applied to a perſon known *before* and *then* actually exiſtent. *Agnoſcimus* quos antea vidimus cognoſcimus quos nunquam prius vidimus.

anſwer is---" *Neither hath this man ſinned, nor his parents,* but that the works of God ſhould be made manifeſt in him, meaning (according to the opinion of thoſe whom I eſteem the beſt commentators on the Scriptures extant) that neither *this* man's ſin, nor his *parents*, were the cauſe why *he* in particular ſhould be born blind, but that God's glory might appear in his cure *.

§ 7. To the above let me add the following declaration of the author of the book of Wiſdom. Yea, rather being good (comparatively ſo, he means) " I came into a body undefiled." Wiſdom, chap. viii. ver. 20.——Where he manifeſtly declares himſelf to have been a *moral agent* in a ſtate prior to his abode here.

§ 8. But what ſeems more home to the point ſtill, is our *Saviour*'s declaration, that John the Baptiſt had actually pre-exiſted in the perſon of Elias (Elijah)---*His diſciples aſk him* (Jeſus) *ſaying, why then ſay the ſcribes that Elias muſt firſt come? And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them, Elias ſhall truly firſt come and reſtore all things. But I ſay unto you, that Elias is* come already, *and they knew him not, and have done unto him whatſoever they liſted, likewiſe alſo ſhall the ſon of man ſuffer of them. Then the diſciples* knew that he ſpake unto them of John the Baptiſt---Mat. ch. xvii. 10. And ſo great was the reſemblance between the Elias of the Old Teſtament, and that of the New, in point of circumſtances and ſituation of life, and ſo equally adapted to their ſtations here were the ſpirit and tenor of their minds, that there is no doubt, I think, but that in them one and the ſame ſoul animated at two different periods of time two different corporeal vehicles.

* Aſſembly Divines Annot. printed 1623.

They

They were both born, as a learned commentator obſerves, (Burket) in bad times; they were both zealous for God and religion; they were both undaunted reprovers of the faults of princes; and were both hated and implacably perſecuted on that very account.

§ 9. That the above paſſages, if not poſitive declarations of a pre-exiſtence of the human ſoul, are more than diſtant alluſions to it, the reader will, I apprehend, find more and more reaſon to conclude as he goes along; eſpecially when he perceives our Saviour himſelf giving plain intimations of it.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

A pre-exiſtence of human ſouls a branch of Chriſtian theology, and the belief of many of the Greek and Latin fathers.

§ 1. I Have long ſince made this obſervation, ſays Mr. Brockleſby, that there is ſcarce a truly pious book written on matters relative to Chriſtian theology, wherein the *pre-exiſtence of human ſouls* is not either implicitly or in expreſs words acknowledged, though it is intentionally perhaps no aſſertor of it*. Of the truth of this obſervation he produces a number of inſtances ſufficient to ſhew, that a ſuppoſed pre-exiſtence of human ſouls was a branch of Chriſtian theology, and the belief of many of the Greek and Latin fathers.

They attribute, ſays he, a celeſtial and divine condition to Adam in his innocency, as appears from their ſuppoſing him to have been firſt formed in the utmoſt perfection; and by their repreſenting the ſoul of man as lapſed from a dignity and purity of ſoul truly celeſtial,

* This Mr. Brockleſby was a man of a moſt prodigious reading, and of an uncommon ſhare of penetration in matters relative to the Chriſtian theology. Singular indeed he is in his opinions, and often ſingular, and ſeemingly uncouth, at firſt ſight, in his phraſeology, owing to a *reach* of ſentiment not to be expreſſed by *common* language. He is emphatical, and greatly ſo, but not elegant; I mean, deals not in that kind of elegance (the only captivating ſort of compoſition now) which carries the admiring reader ſo glibly, ſo ſmoothly, ſo enchantingly on the glaſſy ſurface of a gently flowing—*nothing*. It is not to be wondered therefore, that a work of this great man, the fruit, as he expreſſes himſelf, " of much time and thought, of anxious contemplation and great labour," though abounding with ſpeculations of the utmoſt importance (if matters relative to the Goſpel diſpenſation may be deemed ſuch) is ſcarce to be met with but under a load of uſeleſs lumber. The work

celeſtial, they muſt neceſſarily conclude that it took its origin from a celeſtial ſtate. Agreeably to which, ſays St. Auguſtine, how is the love of our country revived in us, which we had forgot by a long peregrination! And again, Heaven is our country, ſays he, which perhaps by a long peregrination we have forgot *.

Man, ſays St. Chryſoſtom, thou art a ſtranger, a foreigner *here*. Your country is Heaven, thither remit your treaſure †. Chriſt, ſays St. Chryſoſtom again, Chriſt leads us *again* into Heaven ‡, giving us, plainly, to underſtand, that we had been there before. The ſoul is of God, ſays he, in another place, not only in the general way, as all beings are of God their Creator, nor only as being of more than human original (God being peculiarly the father of ſouls and ſpirits) but it was originally poſſeſſed of the divine image. It was of God as iſſuing from paternal ſanctity, c. viii. p. 175. And that our deſcent from thence was conſidered by Chriſtian writers as ſucceſſive to an actual duration and habitation with the celeſtial inhabitants we muſt neceſſarily ſuppoſe, or they were

work to which I allude, is, *An explication of the Goſpel Theiſm, and the Divinity of the Chriſtian Religion, concerning the true Account of the Syſtem of the univerſe, and of the Chriſtian Trinity, printed* 1706. *Large Folio.* A work to which I am greatly indebted for references to authors who have wrote on the doctrine of pre-exiſtence; from whom, together with thoſe extracts which I have myſelf made, I have given the reader many as they lie in Mr. Brockleſby's page.

† Quomodo in nobis *reformatur* amor civitatis noſtræ quam *diuturna peregrinatione*, obliti fueramus. Again—Illa eſt patria noſtra quam *longa* fortaſſe peregrinatione obliti ſumus. St. Aug. in Pſal. xxxii.

† Ξενος και παραπεδημος των ενταυθα πατριδα εχεις εν ερανοις ταυτα κε εκει μεταθες. Chryſ. Ad. Prop. Antioch. Hom. 2.

‡ Χριστος εις εξαχον ημας δι' αυτε παλιν εισηγαγε. Chryſ. De. S. S.

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at very unneceſſary pains to prove, what none but atheiſts will deny, that the ſoul of man ſprung from God.

The ſoul, ſays Lactantius, could not have poſſeſſed ſo much ſagacity, could not have been able to exert itſelf with ſo much energy and adroitneſs, had it not taken its riſe from Heaven *.

* Nec enim tantam poſſe habere ſolertiam tantam vim, tantam celeritatem, niſi originem traheret e cœlo. Lactant. de Divin. Prom. lib. vii.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

A pre-exiſtence of human ſouls, the belief of many eminent writers of a more modern date.

§ 1. AMONG the modern defenders of the doctrine of a pre-exiſtence of human ſouls, there is (as we have ſeen above) the great Dr. Henry More, his ingenious and learned diſciple Mr. Glanville *, the ſagacious Dr. Cheyne †, and that very learned and ingenious divine Dr. Butler, the late Biſhop of Durham ‡.

§ 2. To the above may be added ſome letters in the Turkiſh Spy, and ſome papers, if I miſtake not, in the Rambler. But together with Dr. Henry More, and Mr. Glanville, I would in a particular manner recommend to the reader's peruſal the following tracts---*A letter of reſolutions concerning Origen, and the chiefeſt of his opi-*

* Vid. Mr. Glanville's Lux Orientalis, in which the ſubject is conſidered ſo copiouſly as to have left room for little or nothing new to be added, excepting what ariſes from its being conſidered as the ground-work of the Goſpel diſpenſation.

† I ſhall have occaſion to mention this author more than once as I go along.

‡ There are, ſays he, natural appearances of our being in a ſtate of degeneration, ſee his Anal. p. 111. and again, p. 297, 298. Whoever will conſider the manifold miſeries and even extreme wickedneſs of the world, that the beſt have great wrongneſſes within themſelves, which they complain of and endeavour to amend, but that the generality grow profligate and corrupt with age; that heatheniſh moraliſts thought the preſent to be a ſtate of puniſhment; and what might be added, that the earth, our habitation, has the appearance of being a ruin; whoever, I ſay, will conſider all theſe and ſome other obvious things, will think he has little reaſon to object againſt the Scripture account, that mankind is in a ſtate of degradation; againſt this being the fact how difficult ſoever he may think it to account for or even to *form a diſtinct conception of the reaſons and circumſtances of it.*

nions, printed 1661, a ſcarce, but moſt valuable work---Dr. Henry More's Philoſophical Poems---The Chevalier Ramſay's Philoſophical Principles—A very curious little tract, intitled, the New Practice of Piety, wrote in imitation of Dr. Brown's Religio Medici, an ingenious production by one of the authors of the Athenian Oracles, printed 1704. and Mr. *Chubb's Farewel to the Public*, from which I ſhall hereafter give the reader a very appoſite quotation. There is likewiſe a very elegant poem wrote profeſſedly on the ſubject, not unworthy the learned reader's peruſal; to be met with in Dodſley's collection, and rendered into very elegant Latin by Dr. Ralph Schomberg of Bath.

Theſe are the principal advocates for the doctrine of a *pre-exiſtence* of human ſouls, to the non-acquaintance with which it is owing, I imagine, that ſo many in the world are ſo unreaſonable and *unmeaningly* prejudiced againſt the hypotheſis.—That a *lapſe* likewiſe of human ſouls in that ſuppoſed ſtate of pre-exiſtence, was the opinion of the learned in general, thoſe antient philoſophers quoted above, abundantly evince.—Authorities from *Scripture* likewiſe upon the point will ariſe as we go along, and the next chapter will prove it to have been the opinion not only of the Greek and Latin fathers, but of ſeveral eminent writers of a more modern date.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

A lapſe of human ſouls in a ſtate of pre-exiſtence, a branch of Chriſtian theology, and the belief of many of the Greek and Latin fathers, and ſeveral eminent writers of a more modern date.

§ 1. THE ſouls of men, ſays St. Auguſtine, were divinely virtuous in their original creation, nor have they ſo totally loſt the divine image, but there are the feeble remains, the weak relicks of the image of God *.

Again. Do we not, ſays Arnobius, owe this in the firſt place to God, that we are what we *are*—are called *men*, and that deſcending hither by either an *actual expulſion* from his preſence, or *naturally* in conſequence of a prior lapſe, we are detained in this darkſome habitation of the body †.

We are, ſays St. Baſil, fallen to the earth ‡. And it is the firſt perſuaſion of the antient fathers, ſays Grotius, that the ſouls of men were originally poſſeſſed of the divine image, which now they have *loſt*, and that their regeneration is a reduction thereto. Greg. Nazianzen ſays, that the ſoul is of God, and divine, and partakes of the ſupernal nobility §.

* The rudera, or broken pieces of our firſt building. St. Aug. de Spirit. lib. vi. 28.

† Nonne huic [Deo] debemus hoc ipſum primum quod ſumus ?—quod eſſe homines dicimur, quod ab eo, vel miſſi vel lapſi, cæcitate hujus corporis continemur. Arnob. adverſ. Gent. lib. 1.

‡ Δια τας αμαρτιας καταρριομεν.

§ Orat. i. p. 8.

§ 2. Among writers of a more modern date, we have the following remark from Luther. The ſecond petition of the Lord's Prayer, ſays he, (thy kingdom come) conſtrains us to confeſs with our own mouth, the ſad calamity of our *baniſhment from Heaven.*

All men, ſays Grotius, were from their birth, *ſons of God*, but they loſt that privilege, by alienating themſelves from him.

And Dr. Edes, when ſpeaking of the origin and preſent ſtate of man, ſays, " his being in the world is but a kind of being in the wilderneſs, wherein he is *eſtranged* from the city of God." Agreeable to which, adds he, the Apoſtle to the Epheſians ſays, I beſeech you brethren, as *ſtrangers* and *pilgrims*, that ye abſtain from fleſhy luſts, &c. And again, ſays another writer, having looſed the bands of death, he, namely Chriſt, opened the way to our heavenly country, from which all mankind had *been baniſhed many thouſand years.*— We are caſt, ſays the ſame writer, from on high, into the ſink of this world *.

But that I may not detain the reader too long with quotations and *authorities* in ſupport of a doctrine ſo extremely obvious to *real reaſoning*, I ſhall cloſe this chapter with the two following extracts, the one from the very learned Dr. Iſaac Barrow, and the other from that prodigy of reading and learning---Brockleſby.

§ 3. Thoſe perſons, ſays Dr. Barrow, who for offences wide of malice, were detained in the city of refuge among the Jews, and were prohibited to return home until the death of the High Prieſt, were afterwards reſtored to the land of their poſſeſſion; whereby was intimated, that until after our Saviour's death, no man could *return*

* Laurent Surii Hom. in Die Paſ.

into

into Paradiſe, his *primitive home*, from which man for his ſin had been *excluded*; but that thenceforth all perſons in an evangelical account not malicious or wicked, had a right to *return thither*. Barrow's Serm. 31. on Mark xvi. 19.

§ 4. And we applaud, ſays Brokleſby, thoſe ſayings of the fathers, which affirm that the intent of Chriſt's coming was our *reſtauration*, but not ſuch as ſeem to affirm that the intent of Chriſt's coming was nothing more than to repair the fall of Adam in his *terreſtrial* paradiſe—that we may regain in Chriſt, that which we had loſt in Adam, the image and ſimilitude of God; that by the œconomy of the tree, we might regain that which we had negligently loſt by the tree; that what was loſt of old in Adam by the tree, might be reſtored by the tree of Chriſt's paſſion. Iren. adv. Hor. l. iii. c. 20. ibid. l. v. Tertul. adv. Jud. c. 13.—but, ſays he, if it be a reſtauration, it muſt be counted more than a reſtauration of what was before a heavenly ſtate, and an heavenly world of ſouls muſt be pre-exiſtent, this *preſent* world of rationals muſt be made out of the ruins of the *heavenly* world. Brockleſby, p. 589.

Cloſing therefore our liſt of *authorities* in ſupport of the doctrine of a *pre-exiſtence* and prior *lapſe* of human ſouls, I will now offer to the readers conſideration a few arguments *confirmative* of both, which *reaſon* ſuggeſts.

CHAP-

CHAP. VI.

A lapſe of human ſouls in a ſtate of pre-exiſtence, deducible from man's various infelicities here.

§ 1. INfinite benevolence is as eſſential to the nature of the Divine Being, as infinite juſtice, wiſdom, and power; nor can I conceive it more natural and eſſential to the ſun to give warmth, than for the Deity, when calling creatures into a rational exiſtence, to impart to them inſtant happineſs. But how reverſed is that idea of the Creator, when we are taught to believe the preſent is the *firſt* ſtate of exiſtence in which we have made our appearance.* We are born to troubles as the ſparks fly upwards. We ſuck in miſery with our mother's milk, and the very firſt point of knowledge at which we are enabled to arrive, is to know what ſorrow meaneth. Thoſe piercing cries, with which the newborn babe ſalutes the opening world, how do they echo forth an inward grief? How reluctantly does it meet its enlargement from the impriſoning womb, as if conſcious that it was a paſſage only to a place of puniſhment? How like an outcaſt of Heaven afterwards is the helpleſs infant, "mewling and puking in his nurſe's arms!" Its mental faculties how inept are they and inactive! Its organic powers how inert and languid! Call you this an original, and the painter God? But where then are the finiſhings worthy the hand of the divine maſter? Where thoſe exalted breathings of a freſh-

* Conſider this life, ſays St. Chryſoſtom, and you will find it compounded of nought but tears, obloquy, revilings, ſorrow, negligences, labour, diſeaſes, old age, ſin and death—Συνεπιστον ὁτι ουδεν εχει ο Βιος ειναι μη δακρυα και ονειδη και λοιδοριας και αθυμιας και ὀλιγωριας και πονους και νοσους και γηρας και αμαρτιας και Θανατον.

formed

formed ſoul, reaſon, reflection, active purity? Where the open ever-ſmiling countenance and eyes, that beam forth the glowing happineſs within? Theſe, what but theſe can be the genuine lineaments of a true image of God? But can we find them even in miniature, in infant man? Alas! no. Whence then ſo imperfect and unfiniſhed a piece? Is it not an original? And the artiſt, was it not God? Yes,—But who does not ſee that it is an original terribly damaged? Faded all its colourings, every feature marred!

§ 2. If now from this unpleaſing picture of man in his *infant* ſtate, we proceed to trace him through the progreſſive ſtages of life, how unpleaſing and uncomfortable an appearance does he ſtill make? Youth has its thouſand croſſes and diſappointments; and the trifling pleaſures which in that ſeaſon of giddineſs and folly captivate and amuſe for a while, are more than over-balanced by the occurrence of ſome *ſhadowy* grievances and diſtreſſes that ſit upon the mind with a weight equal to *ſubſtantial* infelicities. Inſtruction is a tax upon the youth's diverſions, not to be endured, and reſtraint of any kind, however ſeaſonable, is a ſeverity not to be borne, and if he cannot *ruin* himſelf in *his own way*, he is quite miſerable.

§ 3. View now this offspring of Divine Providence ripened at length into man, and how does it fare with him then? Why then his former *follies* are exchanged for flagrant immoralities, and his *imaginary* troubles and misfortunes give place to ſuch as are *real*. And ſhould even prudence, piety, and virtue be the governing principles of his after-life, yet what precarious preſervatives are theſe againſt calamity! The good and bad, alas! ſhare them more or leſs indiſcriminately. But can this be the *deſerved* fate of creatures from their *birth*? Can their entrance into this vale of miſery be without an adequate cauſe, without their being chargeable with ſome *prior* criminality,

minality, juſtifying the ſevere diſpenſation * ? You will ſay, perhaps, that this ſuppoſed *firſt* will not be the *laſt* ſtage of man's exiſtence, and that therefore it is eaſy to conceive how the defects, inconveniences, diſorders and calamities, under which he now labours, will be removed in a *ſtate to come*, and that if he is made miſerable, as Scripture informs us he is, through the default of *one*, he will be there ſufficiently rewarded for that miſery by the all-ſufficient merits of *another*---But is not this inverting the idea of Divine Providence, and ſuppoſing God to diſplay mercy to his creatures, only to give a ſanction to a prior *diſpoſition* to involve them in *miſery*? Can a God of infinite rectitude and goodneſs view with an eye of *indignation* creatures juſt ſtarting into a rational exiſtence by the power of his almighty *fiat!* And for no crime?—No crime!—Aye for no crime—Can creatures previouſly to the power of acting *at all*, commit crimes? And to ſuffer for the offence of another, is to ſuffer wrongfully. Such therefore cannot be the will of God towards man. If man comes, which undoubtedly he does, a *ſuffering* creature *here*, it muſt be in conſequence of ſome *perſonal* prior treſpaſs committed elſewhere. But of this more in a ſubſequent chapter.

* Nihil ordinatum ad beatitudinem ſecundum quod hujuſmodi, eſt ordinatum ad *miſeriam*, quia nihil ordinatum ad alterum oppoſitum ſecundum quod hujuſmodi eſt ordinatum ad reliquum. Sed communis eſt conceptio etiam philoſophorum quod humana natura in ſtatu ſub quo condita fuit erat ordinata ad *miſeriam*, ſicut patet, quia ad pœnalitatem & mortem & non niſi per *culpam*, cum dicatur proverb.—*miſeros populos facit peccatum*—ergo non ſtatu ſub quo modo eſt non fuit condita; ergo lapſa eſt a ſtatu ſuæ primæ conditionis. Anſelmus. Vid. Alis. tom. 3.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

A lapſe *of human ſouls deducible from the general depravity of human nature.*

§ 1. HOW great the depravity of human nature is, Scripture, and the experience of paſt ages as well as the preſent, abundantly evince.

§ 2. With reſpect to the former, take for the preſent the two or three following paſſages only.

Who might offend and hath not offended? Or done evil and hath not done it?

O *Jeruſalem*, ſays the prophet *Jeremiah*, *waſh thine heart from wickedneſs that thou mayeſt be ſaved, how long ſhall thy vain thoughts* lodge *within thee?*

Again ſays he, *The heart is deceitful above all things and deſperately wicked, who can know it?*

The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men that they are but vain, ſays the Pſalmiſt.

Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, adultery, fornication, theft, &c. ſays our Saviour.

And again, *We are*, ſays the Apoſtle, *by nature the children of wrath.*

§ 3. If from Scripture we turn to experience, what abundant evidence have we of the depravity of man's nature, from thoſe ſtrong propenſions to evil, diſcoverable, more or leſs in all of us, as ſoon after our entrance into life as we are at all capable of acting in it. Man, forward man, longs to go aſtray from his very cradle, and were his infant efforts not reſtrained by the occaſional reaſonings, rewards or corrections of the watchful parent, what crimes would he not deviſe? What enormities would he not perpetrate? To what follies would he not become enſlaved? Inſomuch that *nature*, who ſhould ſeem firſt entitled to the guardianſhip of her own offspring, is the very laſt to whom we would intruſt the important charge.

Nature, ſays Tully, ſeems to act the part not of a mother, but of a ſtep-mother, in ſending us into the world with wrong and fooliſh propenſities, the ſource of all thoſe deviations from reaſon and virtue which are ſo frequent in the world. A truth which every *ſyſtem of morality* ſuggeſts, and *education* itſelf implies.—The end and deſign of which is not only to ſtrengthen, invigorate, and enrich a weak, languid and barren *underſtanding*, but alſo to correct and reform a vicious and corrupt *will.*

§ 4. The firſt dawnings of ſenſe and reflection in the infant's mind diſcover ſome upriſing paſſion or affection, ſome young diſeaſe, which as the poet ſays,

Grows with his growth, and ſtrengthens with his ſtrength—*

* Nam vitiis nemo ſine naſcitur, optimus ille eſt,
Qui minimis urgetur. Hor. Sat. 3.

is alike conſtitutional to the ſoul, as maladies of various kinds are to the body. And as from its natural or acquired temperature the latter becomes more or leſs ſuſceptible of infection from a peſtilent air or other noxious influences from without, ſo fares it evidently with the former. A kind of *conſtitution* there is in the *ſouls* of men, as well as in their *bodies*, which, though not equally bad in ſome as in others, is more or leſs diſeaſed in all. And proportionably to the difference obſervable in this conſtitutional frame of ſouls in different men, we ſee them excited to different ſorts of gratifications, and varying from each other as much in their paſſions as in their perſons, or choice of food *.

Tom ſtruts a ſoldier, open, generous, brave;
Will ſneaks a ſcrivener—an exceeding knave. POPE.

§ 5. So that whilſt certain objects work upon the fancy of ſome, with a force and energy too powerful for human means alone to repel, they operate feebly, or not at all perhaps on others. When attracted therefore by ſuch as are congruous to a *peculiar* turn of affection, a man commits crimes enormouſly deteſtable; the reflecting part of the world will not fail heartily to pity the offender, at the ſame time that they think it neceſſary to puniſh the offence, and will conſider it rather as a matter of *good fortune*, than any kind of *merit* in themſelves or others, that they ſtand exempt from tranſ-

* ———Quemvis mediâ erŭe turbâ
Aut ob avaritiam, aut miſerâ ambitione laborat.
Hic nuptarum inſanit amoribus, hic puerorum,
Hunc capit argenti ſplendor; ſtupet Albius ære;
Hic mutat merces ſurgente a ſole, ad eum quo
Veſpertina tepet regio, quin per mala præceps
Fertur, uti pulvis collectus turbine, ne quid
Summa deperdat metuens, aut ampliet ut rem. Hor. Sat. 4. lib. 1.

greſſions for which they have no degree of reliſh, which take not their riſe from either bad precepts or bad examples, but grow ſpontaneouſly from nature.

Bad precepts and bad examples do indeed too frequently influence men to the practice of common crimes; evil counſel adminiſtered with ſkill, may enſnare a weak aſſociate into theft, or fornication or adultery—*When he ſeeth a thief, he may conſent unto him, and be partaker with the adulterer.*

Who ſo firm as cannot be ſeduced ?*

But thoſe affections of the mind to which I here allude, and from which is provable man's depravity of nature, are not capable of being inſtilled, any more than they are of being diſpelled by advice, authority or example, and theſe [not to mention thoſe *preternatural* propenſities ſo unhappily ariſing in the breaſts of ſome] are envy, malice, cruelty, revenge, covetouſneſs, ambition, pride, ſubtilty, craft, deceit†. Where any of theſe take place, there nature herſelf gives the ſettlement‡.

§ 5. And

* Julius Cæſar. Warburton, p. 16.—where the power of advice, however pernicious, is ſtrongly painted.

Well, Brutus, ſays his fellow-conſpirator Caſſius [Brutus gone]

———Thou art noble; yet I ſee
Thy honourable metal may be wrought upon
From what it is diſpoſed; therefore 'tis meet,
That noble friends keep ever with their likes,
For who ſo firm as cannot be ſeduced?

† Diſtinguit Hieron. & Græn. inter voluntates carnis & mentium—quod carnis voluntates dicantur quæ incitant ad *carnalia* peccata gulam, ebrietates, &c.

‡ The very ingenious Dr. Baker, in his treatiſe De Affectibus Animi, has a paſſage ſo fully illuſtrative of my meaning, that I could not help giving it an Engliſh dreſs.

This

§ 5. And what character is there in public life, or among thoſe in a more private ſphere of action, either *amiable* or *great*, which is not ſullied by an unlucky intermixture of one or other of nature's foibles, if not flagrant vices.

§ 6. *Agriophilus* and *Philanthropus* are men whoſe lives form an entire contraſt—In the one you have what is completely odious and deteſtable in the general eſtimation of the world; in the other the truly amiable and engaging. And yet it is remarkable, that in that particular courſe of behaviour, wherein *Philanthropus* differs moſt from the temper and conduct of *Agriophilus*, he is moſt reprehenſible.

This paſſion, ſays he, (ſpeaking of envy) is the moſt troubleſome inmate of the human heart, it is an inteſtine plague, diffuſing its poiſonous influence through the whole maſs of blood and juices,

Sucks up the marrow from the ſolid bone,
Nor leaves within the limbs one drop of blood.

And, ſtrange as it may appear, yet is it, notwithſtanding, true from known facts, that ſymptoms of envy appear in the infant ſtate of man from his very cradle. Inſomuch that it is not unuſual to ſee a babe pining and languiſhing in a moſt wretched manner with this paſſion, as with a conſumptive malady. Nor is it capable of being freed from the overpowering diſorder by any medical art or aſſiſtance whatever, but by either a total removal, or a pretended ſlight of the infant rival.

Hæc eſt hoſpes (nempe invidia) humani pectoris moleſtiſſima; hæc inteſtina peſtis, quæ ſanguine, humoribuſque noſtris malum ſuum immiſcet virus; quæ

Intactis vorat oſſibus medullas,
Et totum bibit artubus cruorem.

Etiam in tenellâ hominis ætate, ipſiſque ab incunabulis (mirum eſt quod dicturus ſum, at experientiâ ſatis pervulgatum) produnt ſe haud obſcura quædam zelotypiæ ſigna; ita ut infantulum videre liceat ex hoc affectu tabe miſerrimè extenuari, ac langueſcere; non niſi rivali infantulo aut amoto oculis, aut magis de induſtriâ neglecto, arte ullâ, aut auxilio medicorum a gravi morbo liberandum. Vid. D. Baker de Affect. Anim. &c. p, 23, 24.

Impudicatum, &c. Mentium autem voluntatis quæ parant peccata *ſpiritualia*, ut invidia, ſuperbia, vindicta, & alia hujuſmodi. Eſtius in Epheſ. ii, 3.

Agri-

Agriophilus is moroſe, covetous, cruel and revengeful—*Philanthropus* quite the reverſe; he is affable, generous, tender-hearted, compaſſionate. But how does it grieve one to ſee theſe, and many other ſhining virtues, obſcured at once by one ſingle foible of nature—indiſcretion? A frailty which accompanied him from his earlieſt life. *Agriophilus* is *covetous*, *Philanthropus* is *extravagant*—*Agriophilus* hides himſelf from the world, as loving no part of it but that from which he can make a thirty, forty, or an hundred *per cent.* advantage. *Philanthropus*, on the contrary, holding ſuch a mean, low-ſpirited mind in the utmoſt contempt, runs into a culpable negligence in his affairs, and a too exceſſive fondneſs for friendſhips, popularity, and vain applauſe. But is it not wonderful, that two ſuch contraſted diſpoſitions ſhould exiſt in men whoſe ſituation and circumſtances in life give them opportunities of acting entirely the ſame part in it? *Agriophilus* has as much money to ſquander away as *Philanthropus* ever poſſeſſed; but he would not, if he could help it, part with a ſhilling; and *Philanthropus* could have availed himſelf of as many powerful pleas for œconomy and frugality as *Agriophilus*, and would *have ſo done* had he ever been directed by *prudence*.

But how ſhall we account for a *diſſonancy* of principles and propenſions in theſe two—a diſſonancy as great as if it exiſted in beings of a different ſpecies? Is it reſolvable all into the force of example, advice, or ſolicitation? Certainly no. For the one is as univerſally deſpiſed for his inſenſibility and brutality, and he knows it, as the other is condemned for his gaiety and indiſcretion. To what, in ſhort, but a diſſimilarity of *taſte* alone can we aſcribe the extraordinary difference? Taſte, which makes as well the *moral man*, as the *muſician*, *painter*, or *poet*. It is taſte, the ſoul's conſtitutional frame, I mean, that makes the man; and you may as eaſily whip one lad at ſchool into a nice and exquiſite reliſh for muſic, painting, poetry,

poetry, or other arts, as give another, by the uſe of the beſt methods you can deviſe, a nice and delicate turn for honour, integrity, and public ſpirit. And it is notorious what very different effects ariſe frequently from the ſame courſe of diſcipline in general, the ſame ſalutary precepts, patterns, and examples, in two or more youths, the offspring of the ſame parents—How amazingly different very often are their tempers, genius, paſſions, inclinations, purſuits?

Talk what you will of taſte, you'll find
Two of a face *as ſoon as of a* mind—
Why of two brothers rich and reſtleſs—one
Ploughs, burns, manures, and toils from ſun to ſun—
The other ſighs for women, ſports, and wine,
All Townſend's turnips, and all Groſvenor's mine:
Why one like B——— with pay and ſcorn content,
Votes and votes on in Court and Parliament;
One driven by ſtrong beneficence *of ſoul,*
Shall fly, like Oglethorp, from pole to pole?—
'Tis known alone to that directing power,
Who forms the genius *in the natal hour;*
That god of nature, who within us ſtill
Inclines our actions or conſtrains our will,
Various of temper as of face or frame,
Each individual his great end and aim *.

POPE.

§ 7. And

* " Cur alter fratrum ceſſare, et ludere, et ungui,
" Præferat Herodis palmetis pinguibus; alter
" Sylveſtrem flammis, et ferro mitiget agrum:
" Scit *genius* *, natale comes, qui temperat aſtrum,
" Naturæ deus humanæ."

* By the term Genius, Horace means the natural turn, diſpoſition, or ſpirit of a man, and it is called the Deus humanæ naturæ, as being that which gives life and activity to the whole intellectual frame.

" Le:

§ 7. And yet I would not be thought to aſſert, that that which we here call taſte, that predominant, conſtitutional *turn* of mind, with which each man comes into the world *irreſiſtibly*, and by a kind of *fatality*, determines him to his peculiar purſuits. For, generally ſpeaking, its influence either leſſens or is increaſed in proportion to the encouragement or checks it may occaſionally meet with, in the courſe of a well or ill-conducted education. The former will do wonders in breaking or weakening the force of many paſſions, which too uſually rage in the juvenile mind, with double force, by means of the latter; and yet that there are ſome which by the uſe of mere natural powers are irremovable, no one will deny, who conſiders in the leaſt what human nature in general *is*, and always *has been* *.

§ 8. Nor would the argument for the ſoul's depravity be at all weakened, ſhould it be inſiſted on, or could it be even proved that her vices or frailties are propagated among men, by either the influence of bad example, or by an incogitant neglect, or groſs perverſion of right reaſon; ſince in the firſt place, bad examples preſuppoſe

" Le genie, ſays Madam Dacier, qui préſide à la naiſſance de tous les hommes, " et qui etant different, fit la difference des inclinations, et des temperans. Ce ge- " nie n'eſt autre choſe que leur eſprit." Dacier in loco.

* It is inconceivable, ſays a French writer, that the curious obſervers of nature, men who bend their utmoſt application upon ſtudying and knowing themſelves, ſhould not have obſerved, that man is not governed and conducted by reaſon—that reaſon, with all its power and induſtry, cannot deſtroy any one paſſion that is rooted in the heart of man, neither by the help of age, nor by the influence of example, nor by the fear of evil. Vid. L'Eſprit's preface to his deceit of human virtues.

And ſays Seneca, " Nullâ ſapientiâ naturalia corporis, aut animi vitia ponuntur, " quicquid ingenitum eſt lenitur arte, non vincitur." Senec. Epiſt.

" It is more eaſy, ſays an old poet, to give life and education to a man, than to " impart to him a rightly-diſpoſed mind; to which not one has attended, as yet, " who has aimed to make a wiſe man of a fool, or a good man out of a bad one. " If the Deity had given to the Æſculapian tribe the art of correcting and removing " the peccant and malignant humours of the mind, many and great would have been " their

ſuppoſe a viciouſity of mind in thoſe who at firſt ſet the examples; and from the reſiſtance and oppoſition which in various inſtances they are found to meet with in ſome, it may reaſonably be preſumed,

" their fees. But if the νοημα of a man, his leading principle, was any thing capable " of being framed or implanted, that never would have proved in the end a bad man, " who had liſtened to the wholſome preſcripts of a good father. But be your pre- " cepts what they may, it will never be in your power to make a bad man a " good one."

Φυσαι καὶ Θρεψαι ραον Βροτον η φρενας εσθλας
Ενθεμεν· ουδ᾽εις πω τουτο γ᾽ επεφρασατο,
Οστις σωφρον εϑηκε τον αφρονα, καὶ κακον, εσθλον---
Ει δ᾽ Ασκληπιαδαις τουτο εδωκε Θεος,
Πασθαι κακοτητα, καὶ ατηρας φρενας ανδρων,
Πολλους αν μισθους, καὶ μεγαλως εφερον.
Ει δ᾽ ην ποιητον τε καὶ ενθετον ανδρι νοημα,
Ουποτ αν εξ αγαθου πατρος εγεντο κακος
Πειθομενος μυθοισι σαοφροσιν, Αλλα διδασκων
Ουποτε ποιησεις τον κακον---ανδρ αγαθον. Θεογ. γνωμ l. 429.

This paſſage, which I have taken upon me to tranſlate, the reader is deſired to attend to with proper caution, and not to forget that it comes from the pen of an heathen moraliſt, unacquainted, of courſe, with thoſe all-ſufficient reſources for the ſuppreſſion of thoſe bad paſſions, to which Chriſtians are directed, and from which they may, if they are not wanting to themſelves, reap the deſired advantage. And it is introduced here in proof, or illuſtration, of this one obvious truth only, *viz.* that man comes into this world *naturally* bad *.

Nor would I be underſtood to mean, from what has been here advanced, that no one either does, or ever did come into this world altogether uninfected with vicious principles and propenſions; the reverſe having been evidently the caſe, as may be abundantly proved as well from hiſtory, ſacred and profane, as alſo from even the preſent times; but only that, generally ſpeaking, man has at the beſt, and under the advantages of education, interwoven with his virtues, many natural frailties, not to ſay immoralities.

As to the exalted examples of piety and virtue, recorded either in ſacred hiſtory or profane, or of what even the preſent times may be thought to boaſt, theſe, when compared with the bulk of mankind in general (not to mention the more than ordinary powers with which moſt, if not all of the former came furniſhed, that they might become

* Etſi vitæ g nere valde inter ſe homines illi differunt qui indecentius vixerint, quiq; contenentius nemo tamen ſine peccato. Anſelmus. Again. Quis non execretur ſuperbum eorum conamen et impium dicentium poſſe ſine peccato hominem exiſtere ex prop ia voluntate, et non ex gratia Dei. Laureut Sur. rom. quint. Sept. p. 161.

that they never prevail at all, but where there is a correſpondent aptitude of mind for receiving the deſtructive impreſſion *; and then ſecondly, the enquiry here is not by what means we may cure, check the progreſs, or avoid the infection of thoſe diſorders and diſeaſes of the ſoul, which ſink it ſo far below the rank and dignity of intellectual and rational beings, but how to trace them to their fountain-head. It cannot be ſuppoſed, that *Deity* infuſed them; nor can we, with any degree of propriety, aſcribe them, as will be ſhewn hereafter, to any obliquity of nature derived from *Adam*,—derived, I mean, from the nature of that body which we do in reality inherit from him †.

That

become *exemplary* patterns of purity and holineſs to a wicked and degenerate world ‡) theſe, I ſay, are inſtances ſo ſeemingly ſingular and extraordinary, as do not in the leaſt diſprove, what only I would be underſtood to aſſert, that the untutored and undiſciplined mind of man, is in *general*, not only averſe to that which is good, but prone, in reality, to practices ſo abſolutely bad, as to be a diſgrace to the honour and dignity of intelligent and rational beings.

* When we ſay men are miſled by external circumſtances of temptation, it cannot but be underſtood that there is ſomewhat within ourſelves to render thoſe circumſtances temptations, or to render them ſuſceptible of impreſſions from them; ſo when we ſay they are miſled by paſſions, it is always ſuppoſed, that there are occaſions, circumſtances and objects exciting thoſe paſſions, and affording means for gratifying them. Vid. Butler's Anal. p. 107.

† And yet ſuch has been, and is ſtill the prevailing opinion among men, owing to their not forming to themſelves clear conceptions of that *duplex* compoſition of which Scripture and experience prove us to conſiſt, *viz.* the *carnal* man and *ſpiritual*. Some indeed have been wiſe enough to aſcribe to man a *triple* ſoul, the vegetative, animal,

‡ The patriarchs, ſays St. Euſebius, were adorned with a life that is according to nature, (to original nature) by right reaſonings they were adorned with the virtue of religion; by natural reaſonings and written laws, ſteering the right courſe of virtue, they paſſed beyond fleſhy pleaſures into an every-way wiſe and religious life. Beſides which, he ſays, that they had extraordinary appearances of God, and converſe with him; were Φιλοι Θεου και προφηται, "the friends of God and prophets." Euſeb. Prep. Evan. lib. vii. cap. 5, 7. They are therefore, as ſays Brockleſby, not to be looked upon merely as holy men, but as ſome extraordinary miniſters of religion. Book 731.

§ 9. That the latter cannot be the caſe, even this ſingle conſideration evinces, *viz.* that we are not univerſally affected by that body in a

 ſimilar

mal, and rational *; imagining, that among ſo many different ſpecies of ſouls, it was a chance but that there might be one upon which they could, with propriety, fix the riſe and propagation of bad paſſions. In anſwer to this, it may, with great confidence, I think, be affirmed, that the belief of a duplex or triple ſoul in man is an abſolute abſurdity; that only *one* and the *ſame* ſoul actuates and animates that duplex, that ſpiritual and animal nature, of which we now conſiſt; and that, from its acting under two ſeparate and diſtinct relations, there ariſes the exertion of two ſorts of propenſions or deſires, in their natures eſſentially different: theſe *Malebranche* chuſes to diſtinguiſh by the terms *paſſions* and *natural inclinations*; I would rather call them our *paſſions* and our *natural affections*. The former are the reſult and conſequence of the ſoul's relation to, and union with the body: the latter the eſſential workings of its own free and independent ſelf. The one are the cravings, as it were, of the ſoul, to which the nature and conſtitution of the body make her ſubject, which are neceſſary for her ſupport and nouriſhment, and which we have in common with brutes †, *viz.* hunger, thirſt, concupiſcence, ſelf-affection, *&c.* and theſe we may term her *paſſions* in contradiſtinction to thoſe intellectual and independent motions, which are eſſential to, or however ariſe from her ſpiritual frame, and which may therefore be moſt properly ſtiled the ſoul's *affections*. The firſt are what the Apoſtle means by that *law in his members warring againſt the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of ſin*,—that *carnal mind*, which is *enmity againſt God*,—whence

* Alluſive to which abſurdity, ſays Ben Johnſon in his Poetaſter: "What, ſhall I turn ſhark upon my friends, or my friends' friends? I ſcorn it with my three ſouls."
Vid. Warburton, in Shakeſpeare's Twelfth Night, p. 144.

† Agreeably to which the generality of philoſophers, ſays the learned Mr. Brockleſby, diſtinguiſh two parts in the ſoul of man, the inferior and ſuperior. The one is common to the brutes, and falleth within the comprehenſion of ſenſitive nature, which they call παθητικον (the ſeat of the bodily appetites, affections, and paſſions) the other is το λογικον, the rational nature; and between theſe two, as contrary operative principles, there is uſually a conflict and combat. Διτλη γαρ εστι μαχομενη φυσις εις εν κεκραμενη, for two natures, conflicting one with the other, are conjuncted, the ſenſitive (the appetites to ſenſitive good) reſiſting and withſtanding the rational nature, diſcerning and dictating the good of honeſty. In this conflict the ſenſitive nature uſually prevails by its deceit and impetuous violence, not only againſt men's reſolutions to the contrary in their ſober method, but againſt the preſent light and dictates of their minds, εκ βιας επι θυμων αι προσελθεσαι, αγεσι, καὶ ελκυσι, by the force of their deſires, which carry and drag them.

The mind is tyrannically lorded over by brutal affections, which are uſually in motion and commotion, the irrational paſſions poſſeſſing and diſtracting it, and in ſome ſort compelling it to do the things that are deſirable to them. For every paſſion has a compulſory force in it; it dethrones or expels reaſonings. See Brockleſby's Goſpel-Theiſm, p. 708.

ſimilar manner. Men differ from each other as much in their affections as in their faces—And if to this it be replied that that may be owing to ſome different texture and modification of one and the ſame ſpecies of matter, I would aſk, how it comes to paſs that ſuch a great contrariety of tempers ſhould be ſo frequently met with in perſons of the very ſame kind of complexion, and ſeemingly *ſimilar* texture of body *?

The external form and figure indeed is that by which your phyſiognomiſts aim to read the internal man †, yet experience ſhews, that that is not an index which invariably and *infallibly* points *true*.

§ 10. Nor

whence proceed what he ſtiles the *luſts of the fleſh*, *viz.* adultery, fornication, *&c.* the latter are what the ſame Apoſtle terms the *fruits of the ſpirit*, *viz.* love, joy, peace, gentleneſs, meekneſs, *&c.* When we are enquiring therefore into the riſe and progreſs of the various vices and frailties of mankind, we ſhould carefully diſtinguiſh between ſuch propenſions as are in reality their *fault*, and thoſe which are only their *misfortune*. The ſoul's paſſions, thoſe to which it is made ſubject by its alliance with the body, are neceſſary for the ſupport and continuance of that union and connection, and are conſequently only ſinful when gratified beyond the bounds and reſtrictions which reaſon, religion, and the laws of ſociety preſcribe. Theſe we derive neceſſarily from the nature and conſtitution of that body we inherit from *Adam*. And theſe are, properly ſpeaking, not the ſoul's faults, but her misfortunes—are of a carnal, ſenſual nature only; nor are theſe the affections of the mind to which I allude, and from which is provable the depravity of nature, which conſiſts and only conſiſts of irregularities, inconſiſtencies, and actual blemiſhes in her *intellectual* frame—ſuch as are envy, malice, revenge, cruelty, *&c.* And when the Apoſtle ranks even theſe in his catalogue of the *works of the fleſh*, we are not to conſider him as pronouncing them the genuine, neceſſary effects and productions of the fleſh, but as principles which are moſt uſually diſcernable in and leſs reſtrained by thoſe, whoſe deſires terminate more on the gratification of ſenſual appetites and paſſions, than in correcting and reforming the degeneracy of their ſpiritual and more natural affections.

* The reader is to take notice, that I am now ſpeaking of the affections of the mind, not the ſenſual paſſions, which ariſe from the ſoul's connection with the body.

†. Δικος απ οφθαλμε και το νοημα μαθειν. Theoc.

And

§ 10. Nor is there the leaſt reaſon in nature to expect that it ſhould. It is not poſſible that purely paſſive *matter* ſhould impart principles not its own, or, in other words, the active properties and eſſentials of *ſpirit*. So that it is of courſe not poſſible, that the ſoul can receive either its *good* or *bad intellectual qualities* from this or that frame or temperature of the body. We may as well ſuppoſe the very conſtruction of the ſoul to be material, as make it dependent on matter for its properties.

§ 11. The ſoul's native powers indeed are ſo far dependent on the nature and quality of that heterogeneous vehicle wherein it is contained, and from which it is furniſhed with all its proper inſtruments of ſenſe and reflection, as to be enabled to operate to only that confined degree of excellence and perfection, to which the properties of that vehicle are ſuited. Hence ariſes, moſt probably, that ſubordination of intellectual abilities obſervable in the ſeveral ſpecies of intelligent natures. Hence it is that thoſe we term brutes become as inferior to us in their reaſoning faculties, as we are perhaps to angels. Brutes can reaſon and reflect only in part—And how inconſiderable and contracted is the utmoſt range of *human* reaſoning, when compared to the intellectual powers of the *angelic* hoſt! Had the ſouls of brutes been lodged in a vehicle like our own, it is probable that they might have attained as high a degree of rationality in this their ſublunary ſphere of action, as we have done; and that we ſhould ourſelves have experienced a debility of reaſon-

And the wiſe ſon of Sirach ſays, "A man may be known by his looks." Ecclus xix. 29.

Siquidem res eadem nobis et illis eſt, ſays St. Cyprian, [Adverſ. Gent. l. ii. p. 257.] una per quam eſſe animantia dicimur, et motum agitare vitalem. And again, p. 94. Nonne primordiis iiſdem eadem et me et beſtias genuit informavitque natura. Nonne ſpiritus unus eſt qui et illos et me regit. Non conſimilimi ratione reſpiro et video et cæteris afficior ſenſibus?

ing

ing ſimilar to that to which they are reduced, had we been thrown into a body entirely organized, as is theirs *.

§ 12. As the inherent depravity of the ſoul therefore evidently proceeds not from the conſtitutional qualities of that body it is made to inhabit here; neither is it,

Secondly, to be conſidered as impreſſed on it by him that *formed* it.

§ 13. It is impoſſible that Deity can be the parent of imperfection. By which I do not mean to aſſert, that God cannot produce any thing ſhort of, or inferior to perfection itſelf. For then *finite*

* Moſt of the ancient philoſophers taught, that the ſouls of beaſts were rational; from whence it follows, that they believed thoſe ſouls to differ in *degrees* of rationality from thoſe of men. Anaxagoras placed that difference in this particular, viz. "That men are capable of explaining their reaſonings, whereas beaſts are not able "to explain theirs." Vid. Plutarch. de Placit. Philoſ. lib. v. cap. 20. p. 908.

Pythagoras and Plato had the ſame thoughts on this point. They ſaid, that the ſouls of beaſts, though truly rational, act not according to reaſon, becauſe they want ſpeech, and their organs are not well proportioned. That the mere diſpoſition of the organs hindered reaſon from appearing in beaſts, as it appears in men. See Bayle's life of Pereira.

Agreeably to which, ſays Virgil,

> Igneus eſt ollis vigor et cœleſtis origo
> Seminibus: quantum non noxia corpora tardant,
> Terrenique hebetant artus, moribundaque membra.

And that the ſouls of men and beaſts, are, in their nature, intrinſically the ſame, and that they derived their exiſtence from one and the ſame *ſource*, we are authoriſed to conclude, from what the ſacred preacher ſays upon that point.

"I ſaid in my heart, concerning the eſtate of the ſons of men, that God might "manifeſt, or (as agreeably to the original it ſhould be rendered) God will make "manifeſt, that they are beaſts. For that which befalleth the ſons of men, be-"falleth beaſts, even one thing befalleth them; as one dieth, ſo dieth the other, yea "they

finite beings could not be the offspring of an *infinite* one, nor an effect be unequal to the cauſe from whence it proceeded—But this I do venture to aſſert, that nothing imperfect in *its kind* can come out as ſuch immediately from the hands of God. And yet however true and unqueſtionable ſuch a poſition is, the reverſe would evidently be the caſe, if man in his ſtate of *nature*, is as he came *firſt* from the hands of God; for then every intellectual deformity and irregularity is a blemiſh in the creature, chargeable wholly and ſolely

" they have all one breath, ſo that a man hath no pre-eminence over a beaſt. All go " unto one place, all are of duſt, and all turn to duſt again." Eccleſ. iii. 19, 20.

Diogenes ſaid, that beaſts are made up of a body and a ſoul, and that if their ſoul does not actually feel and reaſon, it is becauſe the thickneſs of its organs, and the great quantity of humours, reduce it to the condition of mad-men. See Plut. de Plac. Philoſoph.

Appoſite to this reflection is the following extract of the ingenious author of Reflections on the Œconomy of Nature in Animal Liſe.

It is certain, ſays he, that the ſelf-motive and ſelf-active principle, or ſpiritual ſubſtance, that actuates or animates organiſed matter, muſt have, eſſentially and actually, inherent in it all thoſe natural qualities, faculties, and endowments, in the higheſt perfection, that it ever exerts or attains to in any time of its duration. To augment or increaſe in eſſential qualities is an abſurdity, and to augment or increaſe naturally is only the property of body and matter; but ſpiritual ſubſtance being indiviſible and immortal, if it could admit of more or leſs, in natural or eſſential qualities, it might ceaſe to be; I mean as to its natural qualities of living, perceiving, and willing, *i. e.* of cogitation or thinking; for as to its moral qualities of juſtice, goodneſs, and truth, they may increaſe or decreaſe to any degree, ſince they entirely depend on the free will, and therefore the natural faculties of living, perceiving, and willing; and thus ſeveral degrees and modifications of activity, ſagacity, and deſire, are eſſentially and uniformly permanent in it in their order and degree, whatever kind of body it animates; and when it does not exert theſe innate and eſſential qualities, it is becauſe it is limited and reſtrained by the nature of groſs matter, and the laws of the body which it animates, which is a foreign impediment, inſuperable to its degree of ſelf-activity and ſelf-nobility. For an angel is as truly an angel, as to its ſpiritual nature and faculties, informing the body of a ſerpent, or any other organized body, as informing the body of a man. And an angel, animating any human body, would be only a more perfect man, and, by its natural and eſſential qualities, could then only more perfectly exert human functions and operations. An unorganized body could produce no vital functions; it could only put it into particular motions. Vid. Cheyne, Nat. Method of curing diſeaſes of the body and mind, p. 1, 2, 3.

upon

upon God its Creator; then the envious, the malicious, the cruel and revengeful, are not more excentric from the laws of virtue and purity, or, in other words, not worſe than they *ſhould* or *could* be—and the thing formed may ſay unto him that formed it—*Why haſt thou made me thus?*

§ 14. Moſt writers on the ſubject of the human paſſions aſſert indeed, what may be judged perhaps a ſufficient anſwer to the above remark, that moſt, if not all of thoſe paſſions, which men uſually deem bad, are, in various inſtances, in their *conſequences* good, and of courſe not to be looked upon as blemiſhes and imperfections in our nature—That *ambition*, for example, is productive of deeds which ſerve, in many reſpects, to aggrandize the prince and his people—introduces into a public ſphere of action, men beſt qualified to advance the honour, reputation, and intereſts of their king and country, and tranſmit to poſterity many illuſtrious examples of magnanimity and undaunted bravery—That the paſſion of *pride* ſwells the mind to a reſiſtance of mean, ſelfiſh, abject conſiderations, or any diſhoneſt or unjuſt attacks upon a man's probity—That even *envy* has apparently its advantage, in as much as it ſpurs a man on to a rivalſhip of another in his virtues and *brave* exploits—That *covetouſneſs* ſerves to create an abundance, which the heir, actuated by a kind of ſpirit diſſimilar to what the predeceſſor poſſeſſed, is enabled to diffuſe in various acts of generoſity and a well-placed beneficence. This is the light in which, as far as I can recollect, writers on this ſubject, place, for the moſt part, theſe and other paſſions of the human breaſt, in order to ſhew that they are not, what I eſteem them to be, real blemiſhes.

But, if reaſon may be allowed to be a proper judge in this caſe, I would aſk whether this is not abſolutely confounding the eſſential difference between good and evil—judging of the *nature* of our paſſions

ſions from their *accidental effects* and *conſequences*, and blending the *eſſence* of things with their *ends* and *uſes*? For ſuppoſing, but not granting, that the accidental *effects* iſſuing from thoſe paſſions mentioned above are the only proper criterion for aſcertaining their expediency and real value, we ſhall even then, I think, find ſufficient reaſon to pronounce them, in general, *bad*. They are as frequently miſchievous in their effects, as beneficial, and perhaps more ſo.

It was *ambition*, you'll ſay, that makes *Alexander* ſhine with ſuch diſtinguiſhed luſtre in the annals of fame, and I'll grant it; but did it not give to the world at the ſame time, and in the ſame perſon, a mad-man, and a murderer of millions? It was to the *monarch's pride* that *Babylon* owed her magnificent temples, and her other ſumptuous buildings, which were the glory and wonder of the world; but did not that ſame intoxicating paſſion ſink at laſt the *elated* lord of all into the ſimilitude of a creature inferior to the loweſt of the human ſpecies?

Envy!—ſo far from *that* being a paſſion beneficial in its conſequences to the poſſeſſor, is it not, on the contrary, a deep curſe? Leads it not to the ſuppreſſion of all good will to merit, and a mortification, of courſe, at ſeeing it in others receiving its due reward? It is needleſs to branch out into an innumeration of all its baneful conſequences—Hear only what were its *firſt* effects.

———Say firſt what cauſe
Mov'd our grand parents in that happy ſtate,
Favour'd of Heaven ſo highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and tranſgreſs his will
For one reſtraint—lords of the world beſides?

Who firſt ſeduc'd them to that foul revolt?
The infernal Serpent, he it was, whoſe guile,
Stirr'd up with envy *and revenge, deceiv'd*
The mother of mankind.———

As for *covetouſneſs*, if that be either in principle, or in practice, a virtue, then one of the greateſt of vices is *charity*. And in this idea I have not ſolely in eye the mere *miſer*, whoſe only object of admiration is gold; but the *unfeeling* rich in general. "Compaſſion! talk not to me of compaſſion. Am I to relieve your wants?" Why not? I thought that the *rich* were *Heaven*'s truſtees for the *poor*. "Be it ſo; yet how do I know that you are an object worthy of my liberality? or that the aſſiſtance aſked will be *eſſentially* ſerviceable to you?" Enquire. "Enquire! What, enquire into other people's affairs! At that rate there will be no end of—*doing good*."

§ 15. In ſhort, it will not be denied, but that in the general courſe of God's providence, *good* will frequently ariſe out of *evil*. But then it ought to be conſidered, that the good accidentally iſſuing from evil, does not alter its ſpecific nature and quality. And as there are paſſions which, without any kind of diſpute, are intrinſically *good*—the reverſe of thoſe paſſions muſt of courſe be intrinſically *bad*, be they in their conſequences *accidentally* this or that; adieu elſe to all diſtinctions between *good* and *evil*, between virtue and vice, between the righteous and the wicked!

As therefore among the various affections incident to mankind, there are ſome which muſt undoubtedly be denominated *bad*, thoſe are a blemiſh in the *creature* chargeable on the *Creator*, if the former had not an *exiſtence prior* to its appearance *here*.

§ 16. It

§ 16. It is urged indeed by a very lively and ſprightly writer, "That in the ſcale of beings there muſt be ſomewhere ſuch a "creature as man, with all his infirmities about him—that a re- "moval of theſe would be altering his very nature, and that as "ſoon as he became perfect, he *muſt ceaſe to be man* *.

The removal of man's infirmities would be altering undoubtedly the very nature of *man*; but is the inference from thence juſt, that man comes into the world with all his imperfections about him, "*becauſe* there muſt be ſomewhere in the ſcale of beings a creature "ſo unfortunately and immorally formed?"

To ſuppoſe God neceſſitated to call into his aid *evil*, for the better carrying on his moral government of the world, is, methinks, an idea of Providence, not ſhort—may I not ſay, of mental blaſphemy? If the ingenious author had ſaid that moral evil will in the final *iſſue* of things be productive of a far ſuperior degree of moral good, it would have been judged by the generality of his readers, I imagine, a much better apology for the introduction of moral *evil* into the world, than what he has deviſed.

Having now ſhewn, that the *depravity* of the human mind ariſes not from the groſs ſtate and condition of that body in which the ſoul is now lodged, or from *impreſſions* made on it by him that formed it, will not the inference appear at leaſt highly *probable*, that it can be nought elſe than the effect of a lapſe of ſouls in a pre-exiſtent ſtate †, eſpecially if to what has been already obſerved, there is

* See Nat. and Orig. of Evil, p. 98. and an ingenious anſwer to it by the Rev. Mr. Shepherd, F. C. C. C. Oxon.

† A ſumma bonitate nihil afficitur, quod non ſit magis inclinabile ad bonitatem quam ad malitiam; ergo in *prima conditione* magis fuit humana natura inclinabilis

is added an impartial attention to the enſuing chapters? And as the article of the church of England concerning original ſin has been generally underſtood to aſſert that the depravity of human nature is a corruption of the heart derived entirely from Adam's tranſgreſſion; the reader will not, I hope, think it too digreſſive from the point in view to take that article under conſideration, and to ſee whether it can with any degree of propriety be interpreted into ſuch a meaning.

ad bonitatem quam ad malitiam; ſed ſecundum ſtatum *preſentem* proprior eſt ad malitiam, unde ſenſus hominis & cogitatio prona ſunt ad malum & ab adoleſcentia ſua. Gen. 8. relinquitur ergo quod eſt lapſa a ſtatu ſuæ primæ conditionis. Anſelmus.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

The article of the church of England concerning original ſin, and the depravity of human nature conſidered and explained.

§ 1. "ORiginal ſin," ſays the ninth article of the church of *England*, "ſtandeth not in the following of *Adam*, (as the "*Pelagians* do vainly boaſt) but it is the *nature* of every man that "is naturally engendered of the offspring of *Adam*, whereby man "is very far gone from original righteouſneſs, and is of his own "nature inclined to evil, ſo that the fleſh luſteth always contrary "to the ſpirit, and therefore in every perſon born into the world it "deſerves God's wrath and damnation."

§ 2. From the firſt clauſe of this article there two are propoſitions plainly deducible; the former of which is *affirmative*, and the other *negative*.

Firſt, it is therein poſitively implied (though not indeed actually, and in expreſs terms declared) that there is a particular kind of ſin chargeable upon mankind, which is peculiarly and moſt properly termed *original*; but that

Secondly, and negatively, the ſin ſo called is not what the *Pelagians* pronounced it to be.

§ 3. Now, though it cannot be denied, that the term *original*, as applied to *ſin*, is no where to be met with in holy writ, yet ſufficient

ſufficient authority ariſes from thence for imputing to the whole race of mankind what may aptly enough be termed the guilt of *original ſin*. This was the opinion of the church in the fifth century, though as to its ideas of the nature of it, and the circumſtances wherein it conſiſted, the church and *Pelagians* widely differed, without being either of them, as it happened, in the right.

§ 4. The former reſolved it all into *Adam*'s fatal offence, the latter into ſuch kind of treſpaſſes as were peculiarly men's own. The one ſuppoſed that the ſin of *Adam* was of ſuch an univerſal and diffuſive efficacy, as to derive a guilt and ſtain to mankind in all ages of the world, and this on account of the relation which all men have to *Adam*, as their natural or moral principal, or head, from whom they *therefore* derive a general depravity of nature, and a mind prone to ſin and wickedneſs; the other urged, that *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion was a crime of a perſonal nature only, and not derivative of any of the leaſt guilt to his deſcendants; that it was not productive of any of thoſe bad propenſions obſervable ſince in mankind, but that both he and they were *originally* created perfectly pure and innocent, though fallible and peccable at the ſame time; and that conſequently ſin took its origin from, and could only be imputable to, every man's own perſonal treſpaſſes *.

Though of theſe two opinions on this point, the latter makes by much the neareſt approach to truth, the former admitting of no kind of defence from either reaſon or Scripture, as will hereafter be fully ſhewn, yet it does not ſufficiently coincide with holy writ, which, whilſt it gives plain intimations of another kind of guilt imputable to

* Hæreſin illius (Pelagii) quod attinet ſumma huc fere redit. Peccatum originale funditus ſuſtulit, docens Adami peccatum ſoboli ejus non imputari, unumquemque e contra in eadem quâ Adam creatus eſt voluntatis perfectione naſci. Vid. Cave. Script. Eccleſ. Hiſt. Liter. Vol. i. p.

mankind,

man kind, than what ariſes merely from their own perſonal treſpaſſes here, is repugnant altogether to *Pelagius*'s conjecture, that *Adam* and his poſterity came into this world perfectly pure and innocent.

We are, ſays the Apoſtle, by *nature* the children of wrath, *&c.*

§ 5. Amidſt this great oppoſition of opinions between the church and the *Pelagians*, concerning *original ſin*, in which each of them ran wide of the mark, the compilers of our articles, by their openly condemning the one, and tacitly rejecting the other, had, one would think, an eye to a *ſtate pre-exiſtent*, as the only hypotheſis by means of which could fairly be removed every difficulty lying in the way of both. If that be not the caſe, it will be difficult, if not abſolutely impoſſible, to explain that article in any rational or conſiſtent ſenſe at all.

§ 6. "Original ſin, ſays the article, ſtandeth not in the following "of *Adam* (as the *Pelagians* do vainly talk)" *i. e.* It ſtandeth not in ſinning, like him, perſonally *here*, and againſt an expreſs law of God. Well, but how then doth it ſtand? Standeth it in any crime relative or imputative? No. Standeth it in any guilt or ſtain in mankind, derived to them from *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion, on account of the relation which all men bear to him, as their natural principal or head? No ſuch thing. But it is—What? "Why it is the fault "or corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engen-"dered of the offspring of *Adam*, whereby man is far gone from ori-"riginal righteouſneſs, and is of his own *nature* inclined to evil."

§ 7. Now it will not conſiſt with the reaſon and nature of things, or with our uſual ideas of the amiable and all-perfect attributes of God, to imagine that the fault or corruption of the nature of every man.

man is *therefore* ſinful, ſo as to deſerve *God's wrath and damnation*, *becauſe* he is of the offſpring of *Adam*. Nor ſhould we haſtily aſcribe to the compilers of our articles an opinion ſo horrid.

When they therefore ſay, that original ſin is a fault, or corruption of the nature of every man that is naturally engendered of the offſpring of *Adam*, they can, I apprehend, mean nothing more or leſs than this, *viz.* That it is a fault or corruption interwoven in the *nature* of every offſpring of *Adam*, whereby, or on account of which fault or corruption, man is far gone from original righteouſneſs (that righteouſneſs in which he was originally created) and is therefore of his *own* nature, not any kind of nature derived to him from *Adam*, of his *own* nature inclined to evil.

§ 8. Let us ſee then what, upon a further examination of this article, as above ſtated and explained, may be fairly deduced from it, relative to the doctrine of original ſin.

Firſt then, it tells us what it is not, and

Secondly, it informs us what in reality it is.

It is not what the *Pelagians* eſteemed it to be, whoſe opinion on that head we have before conſidered, and ſhall not need now to repeat—But it is—What? Why it is the guilt of a particular kind of ſin emphatically termed *original*, the nature of which we find expreſſly repreſented to us under the idea of a fault or corruption of the nature of every man naturally engendered of the offſpring of *Adam*, *&c.* But how the fault or corruption of every offſpring of *Adam*? Are we by that to underſtand, that *Adam*'s ſin is tranſmitted to us by traduction? That cannot, with any ſhadow of reaſon, be ſuppoſed. Nothing but a man's own *perſonal* diſobedience can make him a ſinner

ner in the ſight of *man*, or of *God*. He only that *ſins* can be a *ſinner* *. No one can ſin by proxy, can ſin by means of an act of another perſon, to which he himſelf was not privy, or, in any ſhape acceſſary. And, will it be required of me to *prove* that we could be neither mediately, or immediately, agents in the ſinful act of *Adam*, which was committed at a diſtance of more than 5000 years before we are *ſuppoſed* to have had a vital exiſtence. ?

§ 9. If however it be urged, that the article cannot mean that we are *conſidered* as actual ſinners, but only that we are *treated as* ſuch in conſequence of *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion; that not *his* ſin, but that *body* of ſin, which he contracted by ſin, is tranſmitted to us by traduction, on account of which we are made naturally ſubject to ſin, and of conſequence equally expoſed with him to the guilt and puniſhment of it; what is this but a reflection on the juſtice and wiſdom of God, as infamous as the former ?——Suppoſing us not accountable, I mean, for any *prior* ſin——there being no difference, obſervable to me between making ſin itſelf neceſſary, hereditary,

* " A repreſentative of a moral action, ſays Dr. Taylor, is what I can by no means digeſt. A repreſentative, the guilt of whoſe conduct ſhall be imputed to us, and whoſe ſins ſhall corrupt and debauch our nature, is one of the greateſt abſurdities in all the ſyſtems of corrupt religion. That any man, without my knowledge or conſent, ſhould ſo repreſent me, that when he is guilty, I am to be reputed guilty; and when he tranſgreſſes, I ſhall be accountable and puniſhable for his tranſgreſſion, and thereby ſubjected to the wrath and curſe of God; nay further, that his wickedneſs ſhall give me a ſinful nature, and all this before I am born, and conſequently while I am in no capacity of knowing, helping, or hindering what he doth; ſurely any one, ſays that ingenious writer, who dares uſe his underſtanding, muſt clearly ſee this is unreaſonable, and altogether inconſiſtent with the truth and goodneſs of God." See Dr. Taylor's ſupplement to Script. Doct. of Orig Sin, p. 109.

Nor does the Apoſtle in Rom. v. 12—20, as the ſame writer had before obſerved, mention or intimate the conveyance of a ſinful nature, or any conſequence of Adam's offence, in which all mankind are concerned, beſides that death which all men die, when they leave this world. Vid. ibid. p. 107.

And, as ſays St. Chryſoſtom, we are puniſhed or ſaved by our own works. Απο των οικειων εργων κολαζομεθα και σωσομεθα..

or *eſſential* to the ſoul, and the cloathing that ſoul with a body which neceſſarily prompts, diſpoſes, or gives fuel to evil actions.

§ 10. When our article therefore ſays, that original ſin "is the fault or corruption of the *nature* of every man that is naturally engendered of the offspring of *Adam*," it can only in reaſon *mean*, that ſin is *born* with every ſuch offspring of *Adam*, and brought into the world with him from the very womb, not by any derived, imputed guilt of another *, but from ſome actual and inherent depravity in his own nature; for the article, in expreſs terms, declares, that "on account of this fault or corruption of the nature of man, he is far gone from original righteouſneſs."

§ 11. If it be ſaid, that by original righteouſneſs we are to underſtand that ſtate of righteouſneſs only in which *Adam* was created, and from which man is far gone, *i. e.* widely differs from—*quam longiſſime diſtat*—by means of a viciоſity of nature with which he comes into the world; I would aſk, how we can make it reconcilable with reaſon to ſuppoſe, that God ſhould, in the exerciſe of his creative power and authority, indicate ſo cruel a partiality towards the *deſcendants* of Adam, as to force them into exiſtence with a leſs ſhare of infuſed righteouſneſs in *their* nature, than was vouchſafed to their *primogenitor*? Or that becauſe the one forfeited at length that integrity and uprightneſs of ſoul, with which *he* was at firſt formed, his *offspring* ſhould be neceſſarily created in ſin? ſhould, at their ſuppoſed firſt entrance into life, be made ſlaves to impetuous

* It is not poſſible, ſays Mr. Brockleſby, that Adam, by his tranſgreſſion, ſhould merit for the ſouls of all his offspring their ſtate of blindneſs, pravity, ſpiritual death, to be deprived of the holy ſpirit and the divine image, with all the honours and felicities thereof, and to be ſubjected to eternal puniſhment in the world to come; for it never was, nor can be, in any man's power to kill ſouls, ſays he, without their own conſent. Brockleſby, p. 468.

paſ-

paſſions and affections, which the former, being created in the image of God, (*Gen.* i. 27.) could, of courſe, only have contracted by a ſubſequent abuſe of his reaſon and underſtanding? This is a view of the Divine Being and his Providence, comprehenſive, may I not ſay, of abſolute blaſphemy?

§ 12. I cannot therefore ſee what elſe can be meant by the *original righteouſneſs* mentioned in the article under conſideration, than a ſuppoſed actual ſtate of righteouſneſs, in which the intellectual inhabitants of this world were originally created, and from which they had ſwerved in a prior ſtate. Whether that be the caſe or not, it muſt be left to the reader's judgment to determine. This, however, is clearly the ſenſe of the article, as to the *nature* of original ſin, or that wherein it conſiſts, *viz.* that it is the *fault* or *corruption* of the *nature* of every man that is *naturally engendered* of Adam— That that *fault* and *corruption* of *nature* may reaſonably be aſcribed to a prior aſſociation with the fallen angels, ſome following chapters will, I imagine, clearly evince.

CHAP. IX.

The Scripture account of the fall of angels conſidered.

§ 1. ST. Jude informs us, that an order of celeſtial powers incurred in proceſs of time their Maker's diſpleaſure, by not keeping their *firſt eſtate*, and leaving their *habitations*—

" The angels, ſays he, which kept not their firſt eſtate but left " their own *habitations*, he hath reſerved in everlaſting chains " under darkneſs unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 6th.

§ 2. For the more clear underſtanding of this important paſſage in holy writ, I obſerve, as follows, *Firſt*, That each claſs, or diviſion of the angelic hoſt, had, from the beginning, and have ſtill a determinate region in Heaven aſſigned them, as their proper ſphere of glory, and peculiar place of reſidence—Agreeably to which, ſays our Saviour, " In my father's houſe are many man- " ſions." John xiv. 2.—I obſerve *Secondly*, That the intellectual world, that part of it, I mean, with which we ſeem to have any connection, or of which we have any intelligence, appears to have been ranked, and diſpoſed by the Creator, from the beginning, into ſeveral diſtinct claſſes, gradually ſubordinate to each other in dignity and power, in proportion, probably, to the different degrees of intellectual capacity, with which the members of each claſs had been at firſt endowed. Without ſuppoſing ſome ſort of orderly gradation like this, the mind cannot frame to itſelf

any

any idea of an exiſting ſociety or a poſſibility of felicity even in heaven*.

I obſerve, *Thirdly*, that in the paſſage to which we allude, the original word Αρχη, which our tranſlators have rendered *firſt eſtate* is that very word which in the plural number is ſo often uſed in the New Teſtament to denote ſome particular order of angels, and which, in all thoſe places, we denominate *principalities*.

Fourthly, I obſerve, that theſe two expreſſions of the "angels not keeping their firſt eſtate," and "their leaving their own habitations," are not deſigned to convey different, and ſeparate ſenſes, but are explanatory only the one of the other, which the very ſtructure of the ſentence evinces, — The paſſage, therefore, ſhould be rendered thus—

* If it ſhould be urged that a ſubordination of rank and quality in Heaven, would argue a *partial* diſtribution of power and authority among the angelic inhabitants, interruptive of univerſal harmony and equal happineſs, and inconſiſtent with our ideas of celeſtial fruition—I anſwer, that in minds not viciated by pride and ambition, obedience to thoſe to whom reverence or eſteem is due, is a ſatisfaction of mind, at leaſt, *equal* to that which ariſes from a ſuperiority of power, &c. in thoſe to whom is alloted the pre-eminency.

That there was, however, is, and always will be, ſuch a ſubordination of rank and dignity in the celeſtial abodes, we may conclude from thoſe diſtinctions, which we meet with in Scripture, of angels and arch-angels, of cherubim and ſeraphim, of principalities, powers, thrones and dominions. 1 Theſſ. iv. 16. Jud. ix. Ezek. x. Pſal. xviii. 10. Iſa. vi. 2. Rom. viii. 38. Epheſ. i. 21. iii. 10. vi. 12. Col. i. 16. ii. 10. 15.

Agreeably to which, ſays St. Jerom——That there may be due order amongſt rationals, there muſt be τα πρωΐα, τα μεσα, τα εσχαΐα, the prime, the middle, and the laſt.

And again, ſays another writer, "It is in nature as in the moſt perfect harmony, "in an harmony of ſounds, that which is of a middle nature maketh the conſonancy "of the extremes, and in all apt compoſures ſomething of a middle nature is "requiſite." M. Try. Diſſ. 27.

"The

" The angels, which kept not their own principality [την εαυτων " Αρχην] but left their own habitation [το ιδιον Οικητηριον] he hath " reſerved in everlaſting chains." &c.—That therefore *laſtly*, the crime by which the angels fell, in general, was, that they kept not themſelves within the bounds of their own proper ſphere of dignity, and glory, but preſumptuouſly deſerted that ſubordinate rank and ſituation, which God had allotted them in the realms above.

§ 3. Hence it was, that the harmony, and tranquility in Heaven, which reigned unmoleſted before, underwent for a time, a reverſed fate—He whom ſcripture ſtiles the *prince* of *devils*, one moſt probably of the *higheſt order* of ſpirits, moving in a ſphere, perhaps but a few degrees removed (to ſpeak in the language of *men*) from the throne of God,—and diſdaining even the firſt degree of inferiority, aſpiring

" *To ſet himſelf in glory above his peers.*
" *Truſted to have equall'd the Moſt High,*
" *If he oppoſed, and with ambitious aim,*
" *Againſt the throne and monarchy of God,*
" *Rais'd impious war in Heav'n and battle proud,*
" *—With* vain *attempt*"—

Yes—baniſhed with his adherents the realms above, he now waits in *everlaſting chains** and darkneſs all diſconſolate the *judgment of* the

* By the words " everlaſting chains under darkneſs," we are to underſtand a ſtate of confinement in or about this earth, which, when oppoſed to the inexpreſſible glory and brightneſs of the divine preſence, may aptly enoguh be expreſſed by " chains of darkneſs."—See Dr. *Hunt*'s diſſertation on the fall.

And the conjecture is not a little countenanced by certain paſſages in Scripture, where the chief of the devils is called the prince of the power of the *air*, and the devils

the great day—This was what St. John ſaw in a viſion—" There " was war in Heaven, Michael and his angels fought againſt the " *Dragon*, and the *Dragon* fought and his angels, and prevailed " not, neither was their place found any more in Heaven. " And the great *Dragon* was caſt out, that *old Serpent*, called the " *Devil*, and *Satan*, which deceiveth the whole world; he was " caſt out into the earth, and his angels were caſt out with him." Apocal. xii. 7. 8. 9.—Inſtead of a pure *etherial* region, an *aerial* one, ſituated as is generally ſuppoſed within the atmoſphere of this our *terreſtrial* globe was his deſtined abode.* An event to which I make no doubt, the prophet Iſaiah alluded in the following lofty lines of triumph over the King of Babylon.

" How art *thou* fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, ſon of the " morning! How art thou caſt down to the ground which didſt " weaken the nations!"

" For thou haſt ſaid in thine heart, I will aſcend into Heaven, " I will exalt my throne above the ſtars of God: I will ſit alſo " upon the mount of the congregation in the ſides of the north."

" I will aſcend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Moſt High." Iſ. xiv. 12. 13. 14.

devils in general, " Wicked ſpirits in high places"—Epheſ. ii. 2. and vi. 12. and both *Homer* and *Heſiod*, uſe ανηρ for σκοτος caligo, darkneſs.

——Ηερι δ εγχος εκεμπο, και ταχε' ιππω. Homer's Iliad v. 356.
Ηερα εσσαμενοι, παλιν φοιτωντες επ αιαν. Heſiod, Εργ. και Ημερ. 1. 124.

* As other beings have their proper regions, ſo there is, ſays a Greek writer, a land or country of Satan, where the powers of darkneſs, and ſpirits of wickedneſs live and walk, and have their reſting place.

Ουτως εστι γη, και πατρις σαταικη και διαγεσι και εμπεριπατουσι, και επαναπαυονται αι δυναμεις του σκοτους, και τα πνευματα της πονηριας. S. Macarius. Hom. 14.

To

To theſe ſcriptural notices of that event may be added, in confirmation of the truth of it, many obvious alluſions, and even expreſs and poſitive declarations from antient theologers *.

An event awfully intereſting, and alarming indeed!—an event ſo comprehenſive as to its objects, as well as diffuſive of its miſchievous effects, as to have involved in ſin and miſery, the whole race of human beings. All nature ſhared in that original guilt, all nature groans *now* under the ruinous weight of it †. "The whole "creation groaneth and travailleth in pain together until now." For lo! all who have trod this mother earth of ours (ſome few righteous ones only perhaps excepted) had aſſociated, let me ſuppoſe, with

* Minutius Felix's deſcription of demons is, "that their motion is a *heavy ſinking* "from Heaven, and that they withdraw from the *true God* to *matter*."—A Cœlo deorſum gravant et a Deo vero ad materiam avocant, vitam turbant, omnes inquietant, irrepentes etiam corporibus occulti ut ſpiritus tenues: Morbos fingunt, terrent mentes, membra diſtorquent ut ad cultum ſui cogant. Minut. Felix.

And Athenagoras ſays,—that when the angels were created, the things of the creation were committed to their care, and the prince of the apoſtate angels was originally the ruler and preſident of the matter and forms that are in it. Ο της υλης και των εν αυτη ειδων αρχων, Apol. 27. 28. Gr. Nyſſen, and J. Damaſcen ſuppoſe, that when the world was created, the ſeveral parts of it were committed to ſeveral orders of angels, that he who was the devil, was prefect of the terrene order, having the preſidency over the earth, and the adminiſtration of terrene things. And the name by which the Rabins called the devil viz. מרון ſignifying the apoſtate, is plainly alluſive to his apoſtacy from God; as is alſo another of his uſual appellations, viz Satanas, or Satan, the original import of which word is Αποσαλης Rebellis.

The cabaliſtical book Zohar treating of lapſed angels ſays—God threw them down headlong, bound and enchained—Theſe were *Aza* and *Azael*, which R. Eleazer ſays were two angels, which accuſed their Lord, and God caſt them out of the holy place headlong.

And the pagans diſcourſe of a ſort of evil genii, paſſively and *penally* ſuch, which Plutarch calls—Οι Θεηλαλοι, και ουρανοπτελεις εκεινοι τε Εμπεδοκλεους δαιμονες.——"Thoſe God-agitated, and Heaven-fallen demons of Empedocles." See Brockleſby p. 29. 30. 31.

† In the term *nature* I wou'd not be underſtood to include here the *univerſe in general*, but that *ſublunary part* of *intelligent nature* to which *we* belong.

the

the apoſtate powers, aſſimilated more or leſs with them in their various vices, joined them in their revolt from God, ranked with them under the banner of the vile uſurper, aided his foul rebellion, and became captives from that period, more or leſs, to his tyrannous authority*—Elſe wherefore, in the firſt place, is it that ſcripture

* The author expreſſes himſelf here, in terms accommodated to the account given of that event, by the *Apocalyptic apoſtle*, who ſtiles it a *war in Heaven*.——"There was war in Heaven—*Michael* and his angels fought againſt the *Dragon*, and the Dragon fought and his angels." Apoc. xii. 7—The reader muſt therefore conſider the one in the ſame figurative point of view in which reaſon directs him to place the other.—The viſion to which he alluded was of both a *retroſpective* and *prophetic* caſt, ſhewing that a train of devices, ſimilar to thoſe by which Satan (the Dragon) aimed too ſucceſsfully to draw his fellow creatures, from their duty to their Creator, and to inveigle them into acts of impiety, and moral obliquity in Heaven, (all which were acts of rebellion againſt God) would be continued for a time by the divine permiſſion, (though with the like overthrow at laſt,) againſt the church or the *kingdom of Heaven* to be eſtabliſhed upon earth—which appears very evidently to have been the caſe.—Vid. *Hammond*, and other commentators in Loco--

The only idea, therefore, which we can form of the fall of angels from the very ſhort account given us of it in ſcripture, is that of an apoſtacy (in one tribe or principality perhaps) from piety, and moral rectitude; which conſtituting a kind of rebellion againſt the Majeſty of God, ſomewhat ſimilar to the revolt of a temporal colony or province from the allegiance due to the lawful ſovereign, and that by the inſtigation, and under the command of a leader choſen from among themſelves, brought *all* at laſt under the ſame ſentence of expulſion or baniſhment from the divine preſence—But as the diſtinguiſhing eye of Deity, when ſurveying the extenſive overthrow, could not but ſeparate, as intended objects for his future indulgence, the *leſſer* ſort of offenders from the greater, he, inſtead of aſſigning *us* a dwelling among thoſe, whom he *hath reſerved in everlaſting chains under darkneſs*, condeſcended to give us a *probationary* abode *here*; which, though from its incidental calamities, it may be reckoned a kind of *hell* compared with the felicities forfeited above, is an *Heaven*, when contraſted with thoſe regions of miſery to which are doomed the firſt ſeducers of fallen man—The reader will not therefore be ſo undiſcerning, or unfair, as to charge me with ranking mankind in general with the *infernal* powers—No, my hypotheſis does not require a belief ſo horrid—and the contrary is a plain poſitive ſcripture truth. For God (as ſays the apoſtle) has not appointed us unto *Wrath*; but to obtain ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. I. Theſſ. v. 9—Whatever may have been our connection with them in a prior ſtate, we are with reſpect to them, apparently now a detached ſpecies of beings; are brought into a region were drop continual dews of di-

ture repreſents men in their *natural unregenerate* ſtate, not only as alienated from God and goodneſs, ſinners even from their birth—but as *connected* with the prince of thoſe powers that fell, by *ties* of the moſt *intimate* kind; as creatures totally devoted to his ſervice; equally apt for diabolical practices, and of the ſame rank and quality in the ſcale of intellectual beings?——

"When the ungodly curſeth Satan," ſays the wiſe ſon of *Sirach*, "he curſeth his own ſoul." Ecclus, xxi. 27*—

Again, "Ye are of your father the Devil." ſays our Saviour to the infidel Jews, "and the deeds, (τα εργα) the works of your "father ye will do;" intimating, that they, who had not only blaſphemouſly belied him, by telling him that he was a Samaritan, and had a *devil*, but had alſo gone about to *kill him*, gave evident tokens of their affinity and affection to him who was "a *murderer* "from the beginning, and abode not in the *truth*, becauſe there is "no truth in him." John viii. 41. 45.

Again, "He that committeth ſin," ſays St. John, "is of the "Devil, for the Devil ſinneth from the beginning." I. John iii. 8.†

vine grace, are ſent hither as candidates for a reſtoration to our loſt happineſs (of which the others are not yet deemed worthy) with the ſeed, of a new and divine life impregnated in us—the *ſeed of the woman* that will at length finally *break the Serpent's head*. And the only *criterion*, by which to determine what were our *reſpective ſhares* in a pre-exiſtent guilt, is that *natural taſte* and diſpoſition of mind, with which we come into the world, and of which *ſelf-intuition* is the only unerring judge.

* Chriſt, ſays Chryſoſtom, from devils made men angels απο δαιμονων αγγελους τους ανθρωπους ειργασατο. Chryſoſt. Hom. adverſ. Gent. 38. P. 737.

† He that committeth ſin, that is, he that is in a *ſtate of ſin* (in which we are all by nature,) "is of the Devil," in like manner as he that is "*born of God*, *regenerate* "and *born anew*, ſinneth not," i. e. is not in a *ſtate of ſin*, is not under that pollution of ſoul with which he was *ſent* into this world.

Again,

Again. "Ye are from *beneath*," ſays our Saviour to the unbelieving Jews, "I am from above." John viii. 23. Ye are εκ των κατω, from the *powers below*, I am εκ των ανω, from the *powers above*—That is, *your* alliances, friendſhips, and connections, are with the powers *below*, *mine* with the powers *above*. An explanation of that paſſage which will appear, I believe, from a *fair* critical examination, perfectly juſt. And in fact, without ſuppoſing ſome ſuch prior connection with the *rulers* of the *darkneſs* of this world, with thoſe *ſpiritual wickedneſſes among the aereal inhabitants* *, the vicinity of our abode to the place where dwell thoſe apoſtate powers †, Satan's early and artful practices upon our firſt parents continued with too much ſucceſs ſtill upon their unhappy progeny; the ſovereignty he has been permitted to eſtabliſh here, and the various, ſubtle, and inſinuating, or elſe cruel and oppreſſive arts, by which it has ſo long been upheld ‡, are occurrences in the courſe of Divine Providence not eaſily, if at all reconcilable with our ideas of an infinitely juſt, good, and merciful Creator. But an allowed pre-exiſtent concurrence with the fallen powers, as above ſuppoſed, clears away at once every the leaſt appearance of injuſtice or inconſiſtency in the ways of God to man; nor is it poſſible for any hypotheſis to ſtrike the reflecting unprejudiced mind with

* *This* is the true import of τα πνευματικ της πονηριας εν τοις επουρανιοις—in our tranſlation rendered ſpiritual wickedneſs in high places.

† The apoſtle ſpeaks of it as επουρανιος an *aerial abode*, and ſtiles Satan both the prince of the *devils* and the prince of the *power*, (της εξουσιας) i. e. the *dominion* of the *air*. A moſt fatal vicinity this to the inhabitants of this world! For theſe refractory and rebellious ſpirits, though enchained under darkneſs, are yet permitted, we find, under certain limitations of their active powers, to *range about* the earth beneath. Job. i. 7. Apoc. xvi. 13. where they have made it their conſtant buſineſs to ſeduce mankind into apoſtacy, to draw them off from their natural allegiance to God, and ſubject them to the prince of darkneſs. Col. i. 13. Vid. the Turks Prophecy.

‡ Ωσπερ γαρ το σωμα υπο μοιχων διαφθειρεται ουτω και τι Ψυχη υπο λογισμων σατανικων πταιυεται υπο νοηματων διεφθαρμενων υπο νοηματων ατοπων. St. Chryſoſt. Hom. 23. de Judaic. Bapt. p. 279.

more force---more irreſiſtibly---Come then, my dear reader, let us reaſon a little together calmly and with mutual *impartiality*.

§ 2. Had there ſubſiſted between *man* and the *apoſtate* powers no kind of prior intercourſe, alliances, and connections, how comes it that we ſo frequently diſcern in one a ſpontaneous growth of intellectual principles and affections ſo correſpondent altogether with thoſe by which are uſually characterized and diſtinguiſhed the other? How is it that the undiſciplined *unregenerate* heart of man ſends forth ſo plenteous an harveſt of corrupt paſſions and deſires ſo diſgraceful to human nature, ſo congenial to helliſh minds, and ſo impulſive at the ſame time to *diabolical* villanies and horrid cruelties? Should we ranſack *hell* for impieties wherewith to offend *Heaven*, for treachery, deceit, and fraud, formed to entrap, over-reach, and ruin man; for barbarities exerciſed with the utmoſt *unreſervedneſs* and *unrelentings*, is it poſſible we could find *there* willing agents for either purpoſe more apt and accompliſhed than are to be found in almoſt every corner *here**? Alas, no!

§ 3. Men over partial to their own hearts and their own actions (of which ſort much the major part of the world conſiſts) will think the above picture of *naked* nature, a piece unreſembling real life altogether; a portrait unjuſt, ungenerous, and ſhamefully unworthy an human pencil—What! ſhall a man dare to draw a true image of *God* in the ſemblance and ſimilitude of a mere *devil?* Is there no honour, honeſty, or integrity in the heart of man? Is he totally abſorbed in impiety, iniquity, unjuſt, ungenerous, and unworthy purſuits? Has he no ſympathetic feelings of humanity?—No tender-

* Porro autem concipimus homines, id eſt, animas ipſas; quid enim ſunt homines niſi animæ corporibus illigatæ? Alios vidimus immites, facineroſos, audaces, temerarios, præcipites, cæcos, fictos, diſſimulatores, audaces, ſuperbos, arrogantes, avaros, cupidos, libidinoſos, inconſtantes, invalidos, & ſua ipſos decreta conſervare nequeuntes. St. Cyp. Adverſ. Gent. lib. ſecund. p. 34, 35.

neſs

neſs and compaſſion for his fellow-creatures? Is he not on the contrary a *fellow-ſufferer* in their wants, their misfortunes, their diſtreſſes? Does he not oftimes put forth an eager hand to give bread to the hungry, to clothe the naked with a garment, and to releaſe from the loathſome priſon the inadvertent and unfortunate?

If there are vices among men of the moſt heinous and deepeſt dye, is there not an equibalance at leaſt of the faireſt and moſt reſplendent virtues? Has ſuch an one been an actual pilferer of your private property, a deſpoiler of your reputation, been falſe to your friendſhip, treacherous and unfaithful to your confidence? Who is there that holds not all ſuch creatures in the utmoſt deteſtation? Are there robbers and deceivers of a more horrid, diabolical caſt, men who prey upon the very vitals of their country, erecting a private opulence on the ruins of *public intereſt*?—Be it that there are, or rather have been, men of ſuch enormous villainy, yet does there not ſtep forth now and then one armed with the breaſt-plate of patriotic virtue, of a ſteady unwearied reſolution, to vanquiſh the deſtructive *Hydra*?—Does again impiety, infidelity, or atheiſm, rear the impudent head againſt Heaven;—a ſelf-aſſuming, ſelf-ſufficient, *half*-reaſoning, *nothing*?

Who but muſt laugh, if ſuch a man there be;
Who would not weep, if Bolingbroke were he! POPE.

Who but muſt laugh at Voltaire's laugh at grace!
That livelieſt, witieſt, weakeſt—*of our race!* B.

Wit widow'd of good-ſenſe *is worſe than nought,*
It hoiſts more ſail to run againſt a rock;
Thus an half-*Cheſterfield is quite a fool.* YOUNG.

§ 4. Does again hypocriſy wear the maſque of devotion, covetouſneſs that of frugality, and treachery put on the face of friendſhip?

ſhip?—Allowing that there are of theſe deſpicable characters not a few, yet why muſt the men of true piety, generoſity, and diſintereſted worth, be overlooked? And do not in reality the latter, if thrown in the ſcale of obſervation and actual experience, equipoiſe, as I obſerved before, if not overbalance, the utmoſt weight you can make up from the former?—Wherefore then this crying invective againſt human nature? Wherefore ſo unamiable, ſo unbecoming, ſo *unreſembling* a picture of man—as a portrait I mean of the whole ſpecies?

§ 5. This is a ſuppoſed charge of injuſtice to the moral character of my fellow-creatures, which I have obviated in a great meaſure above; if not however to the reader's entire ſatisfaction, I muſt ſolicit his attention to what follows—

Are there then thoſe who may, with propriety, be ranked in the number of the religious, juſt, generous, friendly, tender-hearted and compaſſionate? Are there thoſe who are lovers of their neighbour and country in preference to any mean, dirty, worthleſs, perſonal conſiderations? Are there thoſe who are poſſeſſed of a conſcience void of offence towards God and man? Be it that there are—Yet to what ſource, let me aſk, can any of theſe aſcribe their acknowledged happineſs? If it ariſes not *wholly* and *ſolely* from *nature*, or rather, unleſs nature, *unaſſiſted*, *uninſtructed*, *uneducated*, *unregenerate* nature infuſes ſuch good principles in the hearts of all men *univerſally*, and in the ſame proportion, which Scripture and experience prove not to be the caſe, my hypotheſis ſtands on ſure ground. Is it then from *education*, that men deduce the happy exemption from flagrant vice? Do they owe it to any ſalutary *precepts* enforced by engaging *examples*, or to thoſe more efficacious means for attaining it, the *invigorating*, *regenerating* influences of the *divine ſpirit?* What will even this, I would aſk, prove? Why nothing

nothing more or leſs, in ſhort, than that many of us, by the benefit of thoſe aids ſuppoſed above, eſcape from being the abandoned wretches we ſhould have been *without* them.

But to make a true eſtimate of this boaſted image of *God---man*—we muſt eraſe all its *artificial ſculptured* graces and embelliſhments, ſtrip it of the *borrowed ornaments* and decent drapery of *erudition*, &c. and view it devoid even of that *righteouſneſs, which is of faith.* The miſchief is, we look only at the *fair ſide* of the object, becauſe there the view, though *imperfect* and *incomplete*, is the more *engaging*, not conſidering, that if we examined the *other ſide*, or explored human nature, where ſhe appears in her native dreſs, we ſhould ſee a picture of wretchedneſs and horror. We forget what a ſmall portion of *nature* is ſeen by the eye of common obſervation. An *infiniteſſimal* part only (as the mathematicians word it) appears of what is called the *world*; and this it is which makes us judge ſo erroneouſly when ſpeaking of nature's *native amplitude*. Indulge but one moment's reflection on the horrid barbarities of the *ſavage*, i. e. the undiſciplined, uneducated, unregenerated, unchriſtianized *Indians*, and to what can we with propriety liken that generation—but to a race of *demi-devils*, to a "generation of vipers," whom for their more extraordinary *impieties* in a *prior* ſtate, Providence does not pleaſe to enable, as *yet*, to "flee from the wrath to come."

In ſhort, Scripture all along ſuppoſes thoſe who are in ſuch a ſtate, to be under the power and dominion of ſin and Satan, or what does it mean by declaring, that the *unregenerate*, are *aliens* from God and *goodneſs*—are *children of wrath—children of the Devil?*

And to what other cauſe can we, with any degree of reaſon, aſcribe thoſe ſhocking *cruelties* and unfeeling *practices*, to which they are ſo notoriouſly familiarized? Who, let me aſk, is the *God* which directs

directs and rules *their* hearts? Is it the *God* of *Heaven?* Alas! no. Him they had deſerted, and to his favour are not yet reſtored—They are aliens from God and under the power of the *evil one*, and while they remain *unconverted*, muſt continue in that ſtate of bondage *—or Chriſtianity, the (ſuppoſed) ſole reſtorer of fallen man to God, ſole deliverer from the power of *Satan*, means I know not what. Do *they* then, as well as millions of others more refined, more civilized, more moralized, but alas! not *chriſtianized*, do they *all*, I ſay, labour under the tyranny of the *devil*, and *his works* will they do? Why they are *his own*; (Scripture I think authorizes me ſo to ſpeak) "he comes to his own, and his own receive him—alas! too "naturally and affectionately—" This is in effect the language of Chriſtianity, or Chriſtianity is and ſpeaks I know not what †.

§ 6. Again—Without ſuppoſing a prior connection with the apoſtate powers, how it is poſſible to account for that *early deflection* in our primogenial parents from *moral rectitude*, by which they forfeited, in violation of the ſtrongeſt ties of duty, gratitude, and natural affection, their Maker's regard, involved themſelves and their poſterity in ſcenes of the deepeſt diſtreſs, adding freſh triumph to the too ſucceſsful diſturber of Heaven's repoſe? What but hearts already alienated from the love of God could have yielded ſo very readily to the beguiling enticements of ſo open a traducer of God's

* What may be the fate of thoſe who die in that ſtate, I may perhaps conſider hereafter. Let it not however be haſtily concluded, in the mean time, that *all* who are objects of the divine wrath *here*, muſt neceſſarily remain ſuch in an *hereafter*.

† If in this declaration I ſhould be proved to be in the wrong, by fair argument, I ſhall with the utmoſt ſincerity and compunction, beg pardon of God and man, for publiſhing to the world the extraordinary hypotheſis. In the mean time I muſt own, that the more I contemplate the idea of a lapſe of human ſouls in a ſtate of pre-exiſtence in this light, the more I am confirmed in my belief of it; and the more ſo, as it ſerves ſo effectually to render *Chriſtianity* ſo worthy of all acceptation, which I hope to make appear very ſufficiently from what follows.

autho-

authority, goodneſs and juſtice? What but a depravity of mind acquired in a *prior*, could have given birth to ſo foul a procedure in their *ſubſequent* paradiſaical ſtate*? That the long train of villainies

* It will be objected, that if our firſt parents' obliquity in Eden is neceſſarily to be aſcribed to a *pre-diſpoſition* of mind to unrighteouſneſs, diſobedience and impiety, it will follow that their ſuppoſed aſſociation with the apoſtate powers, and the fall of the tempter and the apoſtate powers themſelves aroſe from a ſimilar ſource.

The force of this objection will, I imagine, be eaſily removed by conſidering, with due attention, that enormous as were the crimes by which the fallen angels forfeited Heaven, and in which I ſuppoſe our firſt parents to have been involved, they took not their riſe either in the one or the other, from a wicked and perverſe *will*, as did the *latter*'s treſpaſs in *Paradiſe*, but from a weak and perverted imagination. That *finite* beings may and muſt be ſubject to the *latter* we cannot doubt, without attributing to the creature (what can with propriety be attributed to the Creator only) an all-perfect and unerring wiſdom.

The *nemo repente fuit turpiſſimus* may be applied to angels as well as men. Nor can we with any the leaſt foundation in reaſon ſuppoſe, but that the fall of the apoſtate powers was effected by *degrees*, by a courſe of *inſenſible* deviations from moral rectitude; which cannot be urged in behalf of our firſt parents' early treſpaſs in Paradiſe.

That beings of the higheſt order in the regions of bliſs, and moving in a ſphere of dignity, pre-eminence and glory too exalted and enrapturing by far for human thought to conceive—that beings (*created*, and of courſe *frail fallible* beings I mean) ſo dignified, ſo exalted, ſo highly favoured of Heaven, ſhould be dazzled, as it were, with their own ſplendor, ſo as to loſe ſight at laſt of that great LUMINARY to which they ſtood indebted for their eximious luſtre—Is not this, I ſay, conceivable? Is it not poſſible? Is it not, in ſhort, probable? And might not ſelf-admiration, *naturally* reſulting from a fancied ſelf-conſequence, by *inſenſible* degrees lead to ſelf-ſufficiency, ſelf-ſufficiency to independency, and independency by degrees to open rebellion, to a *gradual* violation, I mean, of thoſe fundamental laws of Heaven, humility and a due obedience to their Creator? That ignus fatuus of the mind, in ſhort, ſelf-admiration, *naturally* reſulting, as I ſaid, from a fancied ſelf-conſequence, might, by *imperceptible* means, lead the apoſtate powers to that oppoſition to their Maker's authority, for which they were baniſhed their celeſtial habitations. But ſuch a *gradual inſenſible* deviation from original rectitude was not the nature of our firſt parents' tranſgreſſion. They ran counter to their Maker's will *at once* and without heſitation. The aſpiring principles by which they before fell reigned triumphant in their hearts ſtill, and there *needed* not a more powerful allurement by which the tempter drew them into the ſnare laid for them, than the promiſe of their becoming *gods*. God doth know, ſays he, that in the day that thou eateſt thereof, (of the fruit of the tree) ye ſhall be as gods.

A ſufficient anſwer this, I hope, to the objection ſuppoſed above.

and impieties which ſucceeded their horrid tranſgreſſion ſhould ariſe from the ſame ſource, we can eaſily enough conceive. Nor can we wonder in the leaſt at Cain's committing murder, when we are told that " the *Devil* was a murderer from the beginning, and that " *Cain* was of the evil one."—And how uninterrupted the ſucceſſion of moral evil was, till it terminated in an almoſt entire extinction of the human ſpecies by a judicial flood, we read with *horror* indeed, but with little or no *ſurprize:* and in the ſame manner and, as ariſing from the ſame cauſe, do we contemplate that *torrent* of vice and impiety which deluged the whole ſucceeding race of mortals, who were afterwards all *concluded under ſin*, and ſerved only to compoſe a *world lying in wickedneſs*—In ſhort, it is very evident from hiſtory, ſacred and profane, that the heathen world conſiſted in general, of a moſt helpleſs, hopeleſs, abandoned race of animals; wretches from whom the God of all power and might had withdrawn *for a time* the arm of protection—whom he had diſcarded from his favour and protection, baniſhed his divine preſence, and aſſigned over to the ſole guidance of his rival, the prince of darkneſs—and this in conſequence, I conceive, of a prior aſſociation with the *apoſtate* powers.

From the reaſons I have given above for imagining that human ſouls were complicated and involved in the guilt of the fallen angels, by an aſſociation with thoſe apoſtate powers, can the impartial reader and enquirer help concluding, that *that lapſe* of human ſouls is moſt probably the only *original ſin*, and the *ground-work of the Goſpel diſpenſation?* Eſpecially when he takes into conſideration the contents of the following chapter?

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

A lapſe of human ſouls, by an aſſociation *with the* apoſtate *powers, moſt probably the only* original *ſin, and the ground-work of the Goſpel diſpenſation.*

§ 1. ARE we not evidently repreſented in Scripture as born in ſin, by nature the children of wrath, and under the power and dominion of ſin and Satan? Do we not come into the world with a load of guilt upon our ſouls, with ſome foul ſtains in our intellectual frame, by which the original dignity of our nature is debaſed? And is not the exalted deſign of the goſpel œconomy to expiate and atone for that original guilt, to purify our corrupted nature, to reſcue us from the powers of darkneſs, and to re-inſtate us into the glorious liberty of the ſons of God? But this guilt, what in the name of reaſon can it be? And theſe intellectual and moral impurities, what and whence can be their nature and origin? *That* guilt can it poſſibly be any thing elſe than of a perſonal kind? And thoſe mental impurities where can we ſuppoſe them to have been contracted*, but with thoſe very corrupt and impure ſpirits who are now ſo aſſiduous in renewing and increaſing them within us?

§ 2. But farther ſtill—Is the guilt with which, according to the opinion of our church, we ſtand indicted at our birth (ſee p. 106.) of ſo malignant, horrid and deſtructive a nature, as that in every perſon born into the world it deſerves, as our article ſpeaks, God's

* For *contracted* they muſt have been, or *infuſed* by our *Creator*; if the latter, then the *Author of Nature* is the *Author of Evil.*

wrath and indignation; and is it, at the ſame time, no *real* crime of our own?—Till our Saviour became the *Mediator of the new Teſtament, and taſted death for every man——till he finiſhed tranſgreſſion and made an end of ſin*, were the inhabitants of this world to be conſidered indiſcriminately as objects of the divine vengance *on account of Adam's treſpaſs in Paradiſe*?—That that could not be the opinion of thoſe who framed our article concerning original ſin, I have endeavoured to ſhew in my comment on that article. That there is however a *depravity* and *ſinfulneſs* in the *nature* of man, ſcripture and experience, as we have ſeen above, ſufficiently evince. And whether that *depravity*, &c. of *nature* did not ariſe from *ſome* lapſe from original righteouſneſs, an aſſociation, moſt probably, with the apoſtate powers, for reaſons given in the preceding chapter, and whether *that* therefore is not the only original ſin and the ground-work of the goſpel diſpenſation, I wiſh the reader would conſider ſeriouſly and impartially—

§ 3. Oh! No, ſay the reverend the diſſenting clergy, *Original Sin* is what we know nothing at all of, there is no warrant from ſcripture for a belief of any ſuch doctrine—Nor is there any other guilt from which men are redeemed by virtue of our Saviour's mediation, *&c.* but what ariſes from their *perſonal* treſpaſſes here—No, gentlemen? Is *that* in reality your belief, and *that* your idea of Chriſtianity? Why then I muſt take the liberty to aſſure you, that your conceptions of Chriſtianity are far ſhort of the true idea of it, and you under-rate its noble and exalted purpoſes moſt lamentably—

When John ſeeth Jeſus coming to him, he ſaith—Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the *ſin* [αμαρτιαν] the *ſin*, not the *ſins* of the world, alluding, moſt aſſuredly, to that one *univerſal* ſin with which every man comes into the world, and from the guilt of which he is redeemed by Chriſt, which will more clearly appear

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in the courſe of my *application* of our noble hypotheſis; to which I ſhall haſten, after having anſwered the principal objections that may be brought againſt the hypotheſis; referring the reader, in the mean time, to a note below* for an anſwer to ſome arguments brought by

* Dr. Taylor obſerves upon the under-written texts of ſcripture † quoted in the aſſembly of divines catechiſm, as proofs of the "corruption of man's nature, where-"by he is utterly indiſpoſed, diſabled, and made oppoſite unto all that is ſpiritually "good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually," as follows;

Obſ. 3. The ſection, ſays he, conſiſts of ſeveral quotations out of the Old Teſtament, called here *the law*, ver. 19. But, 1ſt, in none of them, taken ſeparately, doth the ſpirit of God ſpeak of any *depravity of nature* derived from Adam, (granted) but manifeſtly of the habits of wickedneſs, which men had *contracted* by their *own* evil doings; as will, I think, undeniably appear, if you carefully peruſe the texts ſet over againſt the proofs in the margin. And in Pſal. x. 4. the wickedneſs of the wicked is expreſsly ſaid, ſays he, to conſiſt in this, that he will not *ſeek after God*, and that *God is not in all his thoughts*. He *might* ſeek after God, but he *will* not. He hath thoughts; a power to think of God, but he doth not uſe it, p. 103. What immediately follows is ſo much to the doctor's diſcredit, as a reaſoner, that I wiſh it could be wiped out of his book. And it is amazing, that one of Dr. Taylor's ſagacity and penetration, ſhould bring, all along, arguments in ſupport of his hypotheſis, which are ſo *apparently* ſubverſive of it.

The ſpirit of God, ſays he, does not, in either of the above-quoted texts, ſpeak of *any* depravity of nature (for that is in general his meaning.) How ſo? Why, he, the ſpirit of God, alludes only to the wickedneſs which men had contracted by their *own* evil doings—and the Pſalmiſt expreſsly ſays, that the wickedneſs of the wicked conſiſted in this—that he *will not ſeek after* God, that *God is not in all his thoughts*—He *might* ſeek after God; but he *will not*, &c.

Now,

† Rom. iii. 10, 20. As it is written, there' is none righteous, no not one. Ver. 11. There is none that underſtandeth, there is none that ſeeketh after God.

Pſal. xiv. 1, 2, 3. ver. 12. They are all gone out of the way, they are all become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no not one.

Pſal. v. 9. ver. 13. Their throat is an open ſepulchre with their tongues they have uſed deceit, the poiſon of aſps is under their lips:

Pſal. iii. 3. ver. 14. Whoſe mouth is full of curſing and bitterneſs. Ver. 15. Their feet are ſwift to ſhed blood.

Pſal. x. 7. ver. 16. Deſtruction and miſery are in their ways.

Prov. i. 16. ver. 17. And the way of peace have they not known.

Iſa. liii. 7, 8. ver. 18. There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Pſal. xxxvi. 1. ver. 19. Now we know that whatſoever things the law ſaith, it ſaith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

by an ingenious writer to prove that our Saviour lived and died only to redeem mankind from the guilt and puniſhment due to their reſpective tranſgreſſions *here*.

Now, if an *habitual, voluntary* propenſity to *evil doings*, a ſettled, determined abjuration of God, implied in their *willfully not* ſeeking him, be not evidences of the *depravity*, &c. of human nature, I know not what can, in the nature of things, be rationally deemed ſuch. Taking this therefore for granted, what ſtronger proofs need be required of the *depravity*, &c. of human nature, than what Dr. *Taylor* has above advanced? But to ſhew that the *texts of ſcripture* there alluded to, are deſigned *declarations* of the depravity and corruption of man's NATURE, be pleaſed to attend to the following obſervations.

Dr. Taylor ſays (Obſ. 2. p. 102.) The apoſtle is not, in the above ſection, ſpeaking of all mankind, but a very ſmall part of mankind viz. the Jews, who alone were then *under the law*, ver. 12. and he is proving from thoſe places, in their own approved writings (which places, ſpeak *of* as well as *to* the natural *Jews*) that there were very great corruptions among them as well as among other people." But how does this quadrate with—*God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to ſee if there were any that would underſtand and ſeek after God. But they are all*, &c. &c.? Pſal. xiv. 3. 4. (I am ſorry to ſee the doctor ſubſtituting *did* underſtand for *would* underſtand.) It ſeems, in ſhort, to me, very evident, that David ſpeaks as *univerſally* in the above texts, with reſpect to the corruption of mankind, as Iſaiah does in chap. liii.—All *we like ſheep have gone aſtray, we have turned every one his own* WAY; *and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us* all. ver. 6. and that antecedently to the juſtification and regeneration to be obtained by a true *operative* faith in Chriſt, the world, (in *general* I mean) is, as it always was, abundant in corrupt propenſions.

But again—The next proof urged by the aſſembly of divines, in the demonſtration of the corruption of human nature, is from Epheſ. chap. ii. ver. 1. 2. 3, upon which ſays Dr. Taylor—In theſe verſes the apoſtle is deſcribing the wretched and deplorable ſtate of the Epheſians, while they were in GENTILE DARKNESS, in order to illuſtrate and magnify the grace of God in calling them to the knowledge and privileges of the goſpel—and when he ſaith, they were dead in *treſpaſſes* and *ſins*, he plainly ſpeaks of their own perſonal iniquities, &c.—committed through the darkneſs and *degeneracy* of their minds, p. 148, 109. And then ſays he, when the apoſtle adds, *and were by nature the children of wrath*, he cannot mean, that they were liable to divine wrath or puniſhment *by* that nature which they brought into the world at their birth—for, as God's *hands have faſhioned and formed us—every one of us*—to ſay the nature *He* gives is the hateful object of his wrath, is little leſs than blaſphemy againſt our good and bountiful Creator, p. 110—Very right: and the inference therefrom is manifeſtly what? Why that, ſuppoſing the nature of man to be corrupt from his cradle it could not come hither *immediately* from the hands of his Creator. But that men are *not corrupt* from their birth, and on that account *children of wrath*, he proves,

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In what manner? Why nature *here*, ſays he, may ſignify *really*, *properly*, *truly*. For obſerve, τεκνα, *children*, ſtrictly ſignifieth the genuine children of parents, by natural generation. But the word is uſed figuratively alſo, to denote relation to a perſon or thing by way of friendſhip, regard, imitation, obligation, &c. The *children* of *God* of the *kingdom*, the *bridegroom*, the *reſurrection*, of *wiſdom*, *light*, *obedience*, *peace*, &c. The *children of wrath* are they who are related to wrath, or liable to rejection and puniſhment. And whereas in thoſe days ſome were children in a lower ſenſe, by *adoption*; ſome in a higher, by *nature*, or proper generation; the apoſtle tells the Epheſians, they were *by nature* children; that is to ſay, children of wrath, or related to wrath, in the moſt real and *proper* ſenſe; as he is a child in the moſt real and proper ſenſe who is one *by nature*, p. 113.

If here, again, the doctor is not (ſophiſtry, I mean, apart) *quoting* and *proving* againſt himſelf, there is a myſtery in his reaſoning which I cannot unfold. In fact by the ημεν τεκνα φυσει οργης, the apoſtle can mean nothing more or leſs than that they were by *birth*, or in other words, by the *native*, *conſtitutional*, *unregenerate frame* of their minds, (that *frame* of mind, I mean, with which they make their *firſt* appearance *here*) children of wrath—(φυσει) as *truly* and *eſſentially* deſtitute of *divine grace*, and, as *ſuch*, objects of the divnie wrath, as were thoſe counterfeit gods to which the Galatians did ſervice, Gal. iv. 8. (as the ſame apoſtle ſpeaks) φυσει—*eſſentially no Gods*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Objections to the doctrine of a pre-exiſtence and prior lapſe of human ſouls ſtated and removed.

OBJECTION I.

§ 1. IT will be aſked, by way of objection to the doctrine of a pre-exiſtence of human ſouls, how it is poſſible that we ſhould have exiſted in a prior ſtate without being able now to form any idea of that ſtate, without having any conſciouſneſs of the ſoul's operations therein, any *revived* images on our minds of celeſtial gratifications paſt, or an inherent remorſe on our conſciences for the ſuppoſed crimes by which they were forfeited, but that all ſhould be buried in one eternal gulph of oblivion.

If this be an objection ſeemingly formidable at firſt view, it will not, I believe, be found upon examination to have ſo much weight as is uſually aſcribed to it nor in fact any weight at all.

§ 2. The moſt rational, comprehenſive, and, I believe, the only true definition of the ſoul of man, is this, viz. that it is a ſpirit, whoſe immediate properties are *ſelf*-motion or activity, *ſelf*-penetration, *ſelf*-contraction and dilatation, together with a power of *penetrating*, *moving*, *altering* (or rather determining the motion of) matter *,—properties to which are neceſſarily annexed the powers of

* The ſoul has not any *power*, or but very little, of moving matter; but her peculiar *privilege* is of determining matter in motion, for if it were an immediate faculty of the ſoul to *contribute* motion to matter, I do not underſtand how that faculty, never failing or diminiſhing, no more than the ſoul itſelf can fail or diminiſh, we ſhould ever be weary of motion. Dr. More, Immor. b. 2. c. 8. p. 7.

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perception, animadverſion, thought, reaſon, reflection, choice.—Theſe are the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics of the ſoul of man; theſe the peculiar properties which evince its conſtitutional frame to be eſſentially different from groſs matter. As *eſſentials*, therefore, they muſt of courſe be coeval with its firſt formation *; whence it follows naturally, that there muſt have exiſted in the ſoul a ſeries of thought, reaſon, reflection, &c. previous to its entrance into this world, unleſs we can ſuppoſe its *entrance into the womb* to be in

* Since it is evident, that matter is a dead ſubſtance in all reſpects, it follows, that an immaterial ſubſtance, or the ſoul, is the *only thing* in us that hath active power. And ſince it hath power, that active power muſt inhere in it, as in its ſubject; or the power muſt belong to the ſoul as a *property of its nature*. It cannot belong to the ſoul, as a mere accident; for power cannot be produced by accident, or a being cannot be endowed with powers by accident; for then we ſhall never be able to ſtop any where; all power might be thus produced by accident, and we muſt give up the *principles of reaſoning*. And ſince *active power* muſt belong to the ſoul, as a property of its nature, that property cannot be ſeparated from it, without deſtroying its nature altogether. For certainly *power* is the greateſt perfection of being, as the want of power is the greateſt imperfection. And a being cannot be deprived of the perfection of its nature, without having its nature altogether deſtroyed. This active power could no more be ſeparated from the ſoul, without an act of omnipotence to deſtroy its nature, than ſolidity (or *inactivity*) could be ſeparated from matter, without an act of omnipotence to deſtroy the nature of matter. And indeed it is abſolutely neceſſary, that as one ſpecies of ſubſtance, *matter*, is utterly inactive by its nature and conſtitution, ſo another ſpecies of it, *ſpirit*, ſhould have activity and power by its nature and conſtitution. Vid. Baxter's Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul, vol. I. p. 553, &c.

If activity then is thus eſſential to the nature of the ſoul, thought and perception muſt be ſo too. For to be active without being percipient of the action, as the ſame writer obſerves, is to be active, not from an *internal principle*, or the power of action, but from *mechanical neceſſity*. To be active implies the *will* to act; and there can be no *will*, but what is determined by a greater or leſs degree of thought, reaſon, reflection and choice. And wherever there is ſenſe of perception, ſays Mr. Locke, there ſome idea is actually produced, and preſent in the underſtanding. B. 2. c. 9. ſect. 4.

The very loweſt kind of life, ſays Baxter, ſeems to conſiſt in the perceptive capacity, ſo that we can never imagine this removed from a living being. And again, ſays he, it does not ſtand in need of the action of external matter upon it to become percipient. Vol. I. p. 267.

reality its firſt formation; an idea in which is involved the groſſeſt abſurdity, not to give it a worſe name—making the Creator, in fact, a coadjutor in the works of fornication, adultery, inceſt.

§ 3. Canſt thou then, whoſoever thou art, to whom the objection ſuppoſed ſeems to be of any weight, tell me what paſſed in thy mind, when thou iſſuedſt firſt from the hands of thy Creator, and waſt made a living ſoul?—Tell me, if thou canſt, what were at that period thy reaſonings, thy reflections? What, I pray thee, were thy perceptions, what the ſtate of thy thoughts, when God faſhioned thee in the womb, and when thou laydſt there for ſome months? And afterwards, when thou firſt hangedſt on thy mother's breaſt, doſt thou remember what gave thee thy pains and thy ſorrows, and what drew from thee thy ſtrong crying? Has thy mind ſtill a feeling of thoſe pains and thoſe ſorrows? Art thou even conſcious that thou hadſt them?—And yet that thou didſt feel them at that time, the big dropping tear abundantly witneſſed. Doſt thou, again, remember by whom thou wert wrapped in ſwadling clothes, or by whom rocked from time to time in thy cradle? Who mixed for thee the milky food, and ſupplied thee with thy daily ſuſtenance? Or were not in reality theſe things ſo?—Alas! they might, or they might not, for any proofs thou canſt bring of either, from thine own *preſent conſciouſneſs*.

When the miniſter at the font ſprinkled thee with the water of baptiſm, and thou wert ingrafted into the body of Chriſt's church, when three or four around him gave ſecurity for thy *leading a godly and a Chriſtian life*, and all joined in devout prayers to the Almighty for the ſame, *rememberеſt thou, I pray, aught of this?*

§ 4. When thy maturer ſtrength enabled thee to ſpring from the cradle, and from thy nurſe's arms, and thou waddledſt with eager pace

from chair to chair, *remembereſt* thou who was the ſedulous attendant on thy feeble frame, and who kept from time to time thy feet from falling?—And when thy tongue denied thee an utterance of what thou didſt not more wiſh to ſpeak, than thoſe about thee to hear, *what* was the pleaſing object of thy fancy *then?*

When afterwards thy tongue was looſed, and thou delightedſt thy fond parents with inceſſant prattle, doſt thou remember the hundredth part of the pretty things thou ſaidſt—being a *witty child*—with what mirth thou regaledſt the admiring gueſt, and with what an heart-felt joy thy doating mother catched the whiſpered applauſe of thy growing genius?

§ 5. Where, again, is thy *conſciouſneſs* of a long train of events, and a variety of detached circumſtances in thy more ripened life, when memory got firm hold on thee? Thy gibes too, thy gambols, thy ſongs, and thy flaſhes of merriment (beſides thy ten thouſand freaks which died in thinking) how few of them are there which have not paſſed off from thy remembrance like the dew of the morn, or like the baſeleſs fabric of a viſion, leaving not a wreck behind. Are not theſe *queſtions* ſufficient *anſwers* to what has been urged above?

Though there are no *footſteps*, ſays Mr. Chubb, by which we can trace out any *pre-exiſting* ſtate we have been in, or that the preſent conſtitution of things is *connected* with any conſtitution that is *paſt*, yet it will not follow that there is no ſuch connection, or that there *has not been*, or *will not be*, any ſuch ſtate. As to the evidence *againſt* our having pre-exiſted, which may be ſuppoſed to ariſe from our not *remembering* any ſuch ſtate, that does not prove the point. There are many *images* pictured upon the human mind, which as ſoon as they are *removed* or obliterated, (by the interpoſition of other images that are impreſſed) they are *forgot*, and are never remembered after-

wards, while life laſteth; and this muſt be the caſe in a *multitude* of inſtances. Now to argue that becauſe theſe images or perceptions are not remembered by us therefore they were not, would be to argue againſt *experience* and *plain fact*. Beſides, as the memory *grows up*, and ripens by and with the human conſtitution, ſo it *weakens* and *decays* with it, and ſometimes the conſtitution receives ſuch a *ſhock* by an apoplectic fit, or otherwiſe, that the uſe of the retentive faculty is almoſt loſt before the *diſſolution* of the body; and therefore if we *do* or *may* loſe the remembrance of preſent things, while the human frame continues, then our *not remembering* that we have pre-exiſted, and borne a part in a conſtitution of things that is paſt, can be no proof that we have not pre-exiſted." *Chubb's Farewel, p.* 324, 325.

§ 6. If then it appears that the ſoul does exiſt in *ſome* periods of life, without retaining in other *ſubſequent* ſtages of her exiſtence, a conſciouſneſs of ſuch exiſtence, why may it not in *others*?—In deliria, ebriety, ſleep, &c. it apparently does. With reſpect to the two firſt, the fact is ſo notorious, that it would be an abſurdity even to ſuppoſe it a matter of doubt with any one. In proof of the latter, I muſt refer the reader to ſome obſervations on *dreams* inſerted in the addenda.

§ 7. That there are ſome ſtages of exiſtence therefore, through which the ſoul does actually paſs, without deriving to itſelf any reflex conſciouſneſs of ſuch prior exiſtencies, viz. from its *firſt* formation to its deſcent into the womb, and its exit from it, in its infant ſtate *always*, and oft times in deliria, ebriety, ſleep, experience proves inconteſtably; and though the *non-conſciouſneſs* of tranſactions paſt, in a ſuppoſed prior ſtate, cannot affect the credibility of the ſoul's having paſſed through ſuch a ſtate, without rendering equally diſputable its *vital* exiſtence in the womb, under the circumſtances

ces mentioned above; yet to ſet the *inſufficiency* of the objection to the doctrine of pre-exiſtence, grounded on the want of *conſciouſneſs*, in a far ſtronger light ſtill, the reader is requeſted to take into conſideration a circumſtance, hitherto ſcarce enough, if at all attended to, which is this, viz. ſuppoſing a *prior* exiſtence ever ſo unqueſtionable, and even demonſtrable, yet it is not in the nature of things *poſſible*, that there ſhould be a *recollection* of things tranſacted in that ſtate. In the firſt place—

§ 8. Unleſs the ſoul had brought with it upon *this* ſtage of action the ſame kind of vehicle wherein it was incloſed in the *former*, how is it poſſible that it ſhould have any *re-conception* of thoſe ideas of which *that* ſort of body only was furniſhed with proper inſtruments for the formation and reception? The ſoul in its former ſtate was converſant, we may ſuppoſe, only with objects immaterial; the preſent furniſhes it with ſuch as are *material* only, *i. e.* the latter are the only objects of which the ſoul's preſent vehicle can derive to the mind any poſitive diſtinct images and repreſentations.

Is it wonderful then that the former ſhould be defaced and diſpoſſeſſed by the latter? Or rather, does it ſeem poſſible, that objects *immaterial* ſhould be let in upon the mind, or any *former* images of it conveyed to it, through organs ſuited to the reception of *material* images only?

§ 9. The ſoul cannot now reflect upon any thing ſpiritual or immaterial, not even of its own nature and eſſence, ſo as to form any idea of it, I mean—and wherefore? Why, becauſe it is itſelf of a ſubſtance immaterial; and the body, by the inſtrumentality of which the ideas of objects are reflected and refracted to the mind, is not adapted to reflect to its view an object ſo refined and imperceptible

tible to preſent ſenſe *. Agreeably to which, ſays Mr. Wollaſton, the ſoul may contemplate the body which it inhabits, be conſcious of its own acts, and reflect upon the ideas it finds; but of its own ſubſtance it can have no adequate notion, unleſs it could be, as it were, object and ſpectator. And again, ſays another writer †, the ſubtle matter which goes out of the body with the ſoul, is indeed too fine to ſtrike upon our groſſer ſenſes, but we may ſee it when God aſſiſts us in an extraordinary manner.

By the *ſubtle matter* here mentioned, is meant that inward vehicle in which Plato, Ariſtotle, Des-Cartes, and our great Dr. More, ſuppoſes the ſoul to act ſeparately from that out-

* In anſwer to which it will be urged, perhaps, that the *nature* of a *ſpirit*, or of objects immaterial, is not leſs conceivable or eaſy to be defined than the nature of any thing elſe. For as for the very *eſſence* or bare *ſubſtance* of any thing whatſoever, he is a very novice in ſpeculation that does not acknowledge *that* utterly *unknowable*; but as for the *eſſential* and inſeparable properties, they are as intelligible and explicable in a ſpirit as in any other ſubject whatſoever. Vid. Dr. More's Antidot. b. 1. c. 4.

That the *nature* and bare *eſſence* of matter and ſpirit is alike *unknowable* and unexplicable, I will not take upon me to deny; but, will it therefore follow, that the exiſtence of each is equally *diſcernible* and *ſenſible?* Material objects act upon our ſenſes ſo as to become actually palpable. But can this be ſaid of objects immaterial; Can the exiſtence of things, not the objects of *ſenſe*—which make not impreſſions on the mind, I mean, by the inſtrumentality of the organs of either hearing, ſeeing, the taſte, or the touch, &c. be ſaid to be equally obvious, knowable and diſcernible as thoſe which exiſt only in the *imagination*, i. e. of whoſe exiſtence the imagination is confirmed *ſolely* by the deductions of reaſon and revelation? And yet, ſuch is the caſe with pure *immateriality*, which is not capable of being manifeſted to any of our bodily ſenſes—it is of a *nature* ſimilar to thoſe exiſtences to which Scripture alludes, when it ſpeaks of felicities which eye hath not ſeen, nor *can* ſee *here*; nor ear heard, nor which have entered into the heart of man to conceive, being perceivable by the eye of the *underſtanding* only.

As for Dr. Berkley's hypotheſis, from which he attempts to reaſon men out of their *ſenſes*, and to *diſprove* the actual *exiſtence* of what they hear, ſee, ſmell, taſte, or feel (Vid. Dr. Berkley's principles of Human Knowledge) I cannot, I own, think it *material* enough to draw the reader's attention to ſo fruitleſs an extravaganza.

† Mr. Poiret, in Mr. Bayle's life of Rorarius.

ward

ward one, the body *, by the inſtrumentality of which it exerts its efformative or plaſtic powers, for ſuch an organization of its outward vehicle, as ſhall be neceſſary for the diſcharge of its vital function in ſuch vehicle, be it an etherial, aerial, or a terreſtrial one.

§ 10. Now agreeably to the opinion of the Platoniſts, and other philoſophers, I ſuppoſe the ſoul to have paſſed through the two *former* of the above-mentioned vehicles, previous to its entrance into *this* †; from whence another argument ariſes, which equally (or rather more powerfully) demonſtrates how impoſſible it is, that there ſhould be a re-conception of things tranſacted in a prior ſtate, was our exiſtence therein ever ſo unqueſtionable.

§ 11. For, ſecondly, each *outward* vehicle of the ſoul being the tablet whereon are impreſſed and treaſured up the images of objects conveyed thither through the organs of *that* vehicle, and reflected to the ſoul from time to time, by the *inſtrumentality* of the *inward* vehicle mentioned above, all *prior* images and impreſſions muſt, of courſe, be *dead* to the ſoul, when it changes that outward vehicle for another. And though it is, methinks, eaſy and reaſonable to imagine, that the regiſtry of facts contained in one vehicle, may be tranſmitted *progreſſively* and upward to another, that the ſoul, in each ſtage of its return thither, from whence it came, may, by

* Ariſtotle plainly affirms, that the ſoul partakes of a body diſtinct from this organized terreſtrial body, conſiſting of a nature etherial and lucid, and analogous to the element of the ſtars. Φυσις αναλογος εσα τω των αστρων στοχειω. Vid. M. Im. b. 2. c. 14. p. 118.

† Should the ſoul have been reduced to a ſtate of *ſilence* and *inactivity*, "before its "turn came to revive in an earthly body," as Dr. More, though with no degree of probability, I think, ſuppoſes (Vid. Immor. b. 2. c. 14. p. 119.) ſuch a ſuppoſition, ſhould it be admitted for truth, will account for an *oblivion* of what happened to it in a *preceding* exiſtence.

means,

means of that nearer approach to the ſource and center of perception, intuition and *reflection*, acquire a re-conceptive intimation of *many* tranſactions paſt, yet its deſcent *hither* into this beſmearing moiſture of the firſt rudiments of life, as Dr. More expreſſes it, muſt, of courſe, lull it into an oblivion of whatever happened to it in its former abodes; nor will the *whole ſcene* of paſt tranſactions, in each ſucceſſive ſtage hither, be exhibited, perhaps, till the day wherein *the books ſhall be opened, and the dead judged, out of thoſe things that are written in the book, according to their works.* Apoc. ch. 20.

§ 12. This however is certain, that whatever were the objects (material or immaterial) with which we had been converſant in a prior ſtate, yet the difference of organs ariſing from different vehicles, muſt render it *impoſſible* for any thing here to recal to the mind images paſt; the preſent vehicle being, toto cœlo, ſo diſſimilar from the former, and ſuited the reception of *terreſtrial* images only.

§ 13. You ſee then of what little avail the ſoul's *non-conſciouſneſs* of tranſactions paſt is, towards rendering incredible its ſuppoſed exiſtence in a prior ſtate; or rather, how impoſſible it is, ſuppoſing ſuch an exiſtence demonſtrable, that there ſhould be tranſmitted to the ſoul, in this its third vehicle, a conſciouſneſs of what paſſed in the firſt.

OBJECTION II.

§ 14. It will, however, in the next place, be urged, that if we are here under a judicial degradation for crimes committed above, are probationers for a recovery of the divine favour forfeited by ſuch treſpaſſes, it is inconceivable how, without being conſcious of either the

the guilt or chaſtiſement therein implied, we can be brought to ſuch a repentant ſtate of mind, as muſt be neceſſary for the obtaining the wiſhed-for reconciliation with our offended God.

§ 15. In anſwer to this objection, I would, in the firſt place, aſk, where lies the fault, if men are really ſo much in the dark, with reſpect to *theſe* points, as the objection ſuppoſes? Would they but give a fair unprejudiced ear to the voice of reaſon, ſcripture, and the moſt learned, ingenious, and religious of almoſt every age, I do not ſee how it is poſſible they can be under any kind of doubt about either.

§ 16. I have already conſidered a pre-exiſtence of human ſouls, not only as the belief of moſt of the learned, in all ages paſt, but as the very ground-work of the goſpel diſpenſation.

The former has been ſufficiently evinced in a foregoing chapter; nor could the latter be leſs obvious to the Chriſtian world in general, would men be perſuaded to throw aſide their prejudices, give the ſcriptures a fair and rational *interpretation*, and aim to make Chriſtianity coincide with the nature and attributes of God, its divine Author. Evidences, without number, of a depraved degenerate nature in man, his own condemning heart ſets in continual array before him; that this cannot be the work either of God or our primogenitor Adam, reaſon proves inconteſtably; that we are, however, children of God's wrath from our birth, and under the power and dominion of Satan, in our *natural unregenerate ſtate*, ariſing, as I have ſuppoſed, from a prior aſſociation with the apoſtate angels, and that it is the all-beneficent and exalted deſign of the glorious goſpel diſpenſation, to reſcue fallen man from the powers of darkneſs,—In proof of all this, I ſay, we have full ſufficient evidence, from reaſon, ſcripture, and the expreſs fundamental articles of the Chriſtian faith; or, I know

not, what is the true language of ſcripture, or what ideas we are to affix to the terms *redemption*, *atonement*, &c.* nor what we are to underſtand by St. Paul's being ſent to open the eyes of the Gentiles; to

* Dr. Taylor, indeed, obſerves as follows: "The ſcriptures of the New Teſtament, excepting Rom. xii. &c. and I. Cor. xv. 21, 22. before explained, do always aſſign the *actual wickedneſs and corruption of mankind, wherewith they have corrupted themſelves*, as a reaſon and ground (next to the grace of God) of Chriſt's coming into the world. When the apoſtle, Rom. i. 16, 17. is profeſſedly demonſtrating the excellency and neceſſity of goſpel grace (which is the ſame thing as the redemption in Chriſt) for the ſalvation of the world, he proves it, not from the ſtate of ſin and miſery, into which they were brought by Adam's fall, but from the ſin and miſery which they had brought upon themſelves by their *own wicked departing from God*—ver. 21. Becauſe, that when they *knew* God, they glorified him, not as God, but became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh hearts were darkened. And ſo on to the end of the chapter.

"And as the Gentiles, ſo likewiſe, the Jews had corrupted themſelves, and ſtood in need of goſpel grace, and redemption, as well as other men. Chap. ii. 3. to ver. 19. where he concludes, he had, from notorious facts and ſcripture proofs, ſtopped every mouth, both of Jew and Gentile, and brought in the *whole world guilty before God*, and inſufficient for their own juſtification upon the deeds of mere law. And then goes on—but *now the righteouſneſs of God*, or that method of ſalvation which the gracious law-giver hath provided, *is manifeſted* to the world, &c. for the benefit of all ſorts of men (ver. 23. For all ſtand in need of it, all having ſinned and come ſhort of the glory of God, i. e. the obedience of God) that they may be juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Chriſt, &c. You ſee the apoſtle grounds the grace of redemption upon the actual wickedneſs of mankind, and upon no other cauſe or reaſon. So Tit. iii. 3. For we ourſelves alſo were ſometimes fooliſh, &c. Ver. 4. But after that the kindneſs and love of God, our Saviour, towards man, appeared—Ver. 5. According to his mercy he ſaved us, &c.—Ver. 6. Which he hath ſhed on us, &c. Ver. 7. That being juſtified by his grace we ſhould be made heirs, &c. Gal. i. 4. He gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from this preſent evil world, i. e. from the luſts of the fleſh. I. Pet. i. 18. We are redeemed from a vain converſation. I. John, iii. 8. For this purpoſe the Son of God was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil. In ſhort (excepting the two places above excepted, which relate only to the reverſing the ſentence of common mortality) I know not of any place in ſcripture where redemption is not aſſigned on God's part, to his own free grace; and on man's part, to the depravity and corruption of the world, wherewith they have depraved themſelves. And I verily believe it is not in the power of any man to bring any text to the contrary." Vid. Dr. Taylor on original Sin, Part 3. p. 290.

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to turn them from darkneſs to light, and from the *power of Satan* unto God—And that the ſtate of the Gentile world is to be conſidered as the *natural* ſtate of men, the following paſſage, from St. Paul to the

The deſign of our Saviour's coming into the world, therefore, according to Dr. Taylor's opinion, was not to redeem mankind from the guilt and puniſhment of any corruption of *nature*, inherent or derived, but to attone for their actual *perſonal* treſpaſſes, or (as he expreſſes it) *their own wicked departing from God*—both Jew and Gentile *had corrupted themſelves*, and ſtood equally in need of goſpel grace and redemption, all having ſinned and come ſhort of the glory of God. But how ſinned? By any derived, imputed guilt from Adam? No, ſays Dr. Taylor; and with great truth, I believe. But they ſinned, ſays he, by *their* wicked departing from God; by *their* own actual, *perſonal* wickedneſs; and on *this*, and no *other* cauſe or reaſon whatſoever, is grounded the grace of redemption. But this wicked departing from God, this *perſonal* wickedneſs—whence proceeded that? What could urge creatures, living *under ſo ſtrong a ſenſe* of the nature and attributes of the divine Being, and of their manifold obligations to him, to requite his inexhauſted goodneſs with ſuch repeated acts of impiety, ingratitude, and vile enormities? What, but a *heart* elapſed from *original righteouſneſs*, eſtranged from God and goodneſs, and devoted wholly to the ſervice of the prince of darkneſs? A releaſe, therefore, from the original *guilt*, deſerved puniſhment, and growing *power* of this malady (and not, as Dr. Taylor ſuppoſes, from the *ſeveral ſpecies* of vice which could not but flow from it) is the whole and ſole object of the redemption by Jeſus Chriſt. This is plainly intimated, by the apoſtle to the Romans, chap. v. and x. *For when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.*—When we were enemies—i. e. when we were in a ſtate of *enmity* with God, *children of wrath* (as we all were by *nature*, on account of that ſtate of ſin and iniquity in which we were born, and thoſe corruptions of nature which attended us from the womb) we were reconciled to God, were reſcued from the power and puniſhment of thoſe corruptions, &c. by the death of Chriſt. And the ſinners to which the apoſtle here alludes, as reconciled to God, and of courſe cleanſed form their ſins, are not to be conſidered as ſinners made ſuch by *perſonal* treſpaſſes *here*, but by that *original* debaſement of nature, in which they were conceived. For, in the firſt ſenſe, even the regenerate and converted, were repreſented as ſinners ſtill. *If we ſay that we have no ſin*, ſays St. John, *we deceive ourſelves, and the truth is not in us.* But ſins, conſidered in the other ſenſe, the ſins which were the immediate objects of redemption, they are forgiven us; are, as the apoſtle ſpeaks, nailed to the croſs. *The body of ſin is deſtroyed. Sin ſhall not now* have dominion over us. *For we are not under the law, but under grace.*

But, ſays Dr. Taylor, "the redeemer himſelf frequently ſpeaks of various parts of his own great work; ſuch as, enlivening the world, converting ſinners, raiſing the dead, &c. but of *redeeming* it from the ſinfulneſs and corruption of nature *derived from Adam*, he ſaith not one word in all the four goſpels." He could not.

the Epheſians, ſeems to evince. *And* you *hath he quickened, who were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins. Wherein, in time paſt, ye walked according to the courſe of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the ſpirit that now worketh in the children of diſobedience. Among whom alſo we all had our converſation in times*

Should you ſay, he is *ſilent* about a *prior lapſe*---gives no intimation that *that* is the *original ſin*---What then? It ſhould be conſidered, that many *truths* were on purpoſe concealed by our Saviour, from even his own diſciples.---I have many things (ſays our Saviour, to his diſciples, juſt before his departure from them) *I have many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now:* But the time cometh (ſays he afterward) that I ſhall no more ſpeak unto you in proverbs, but I ſhall ſhew you plainly of the Father, viz. by the Spirit of truth, which he promiſed to ſend unto them, and which was gradually to unfold to the world the great myſtery of the redemption by Chriſt; a great part of which is to this day, if not totally concealed, at the beſt but obſcurely revealed. But the *Apocalypſe* will, in due Time, unravel all.

Leaving now *Dr. Taylor*, let me take this opportunity to remark, that if our Saviour's *ſilence* with reſpect to an hypotheſis is an inſuperable *objection* to the admiſſion of it, then the ſuppoſed *Adamic* guilt falls to the ground at once—Our Saviour, not having once mentioned either Adam or his guilt, or of us as his deſcendants, and as ſuch, ſharers with him in that guilt. No, turn to his converſation with Nicodemus, John chap. iii. (in which is contained a *ſummary* of the goſpel diſpenſation) and the end and deſign of his coming into the world will appear to be—What? Why that God ſo loved the world that he gave his only begotten ſon that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life, and that the world through him might be ſaved—What? ſaved from the puniſhment due from a derived guilt from Adam? No; of that he gives not the leaſt intimation—Why not then, let me aſk, to ſave us from the puniſhment due to a guilt contracted in a prior ſtate? Did he not declare juſt before that no man hath *aſcended into Heaven* but he that came down from *Heaven even the ſon of man who is in Heaven?*—meaning, as I apprehend, that no man hath aſcended up into Heaven, without having previouſly *deſcended* from thence†. For that the declared deſcent from Heaven previous to an aſcenſion thither, is not applicable to our Saviour *ſolely*, Enoch's and Elijah's *aſcenſion* plainly evince.

† Ει μη ο εκ του ουρανου καταβας——niſi qui prius deſcenderat. —— Such is the implied conſtruction of the participle καταβας in this place, and wherever elſe it occurs in the New Teſtament. Matt. xxviii. 2. Αγγελος γαρ κυριου καταβας εξ ουρανου, For the angel of the Lord *deſcended* [had deſcended] and rolled back the ſtone from the door, &c. See alſo Luke vi. 17. John vi. 41. li. 58. Acts xviii. 15. xx. 10. xxiii. 10. xxv. 6. Epheſ. iv. 10. Καταβαſις, Matt. iii. 22. Καταβαſι, Matt. viii. 1.

paſt,

paſt, in the luſt of our fleſh, fulfilling the deſires of the fleſh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others— Intimating, that the apoſtle and his chriſtian converts were, before their converſion, upon the ſame footing entirely with the Gentile world—walked as they did, according to the courſe of *this* world and of him who is the head of that *aerial* kingdom, and of the ſpirit which now works in the children of diſobedience—(Vid. Eſtium in Loc.) that they were led aſtray, not by the impetuoſity of their *carnal* diſpoſitions only, but by the depravity *των διανοιων* of their mental *affections*, their *minds* alſo; and were *therefore* on that account, and by *nature*, the *children of wrath*, like as others *.

§ 16. And, that the church of England conſiders now the natural *unregenerated* ſtate of man entirely in the ſame light, we have ample evidence, not only from her articles and homilies but from the introduction to the form of infant baptiſm, and in her church catechiſm. For, what is the prieſt's declaration in the introduction to the form of baptiſm? Is it not, "Dearly beloved, foraſmuch as all men are *conceived* and *born in ſin*, and that our Saviour Chriſt ſaith, none can enter into the kingdom of Heaven except he be regenerate, and born a-new, of water and the Holy Ghoſt?" And does he not beſeech the congregation to call upon God, to grant to *that* child, to be baptized, that thing which by *nature* he cannot have? And is

* Dr. Taylor however once more — "Far was it, ſays he, from the apoſtle's thoughts, to ſuggeſt any thing tending to depreciate our nature. His true intent was to convince the Epheſians they were children of wrath through the treſpaſſes and ſins in which they had *walked*. For he is not ſpeaking of their nature, or the conſtitution of their ſouls and bodies, as they came into the world; but, evidently, of the vicious courſe of life they had led among the Gentiles." But to ſhew how fallacious the declaration is, I would aſk *what* and from *whence* were thoſe *principles* which *led* to that vicious courſe of life. Were *they* not bad? And could *they* proceed from any thing leſs than an *inherent* depravity of nature?

not

not his firſt prayer to God, for his *infinite mercies*, that he would *mercifully* look upon that *child*; that he would *waſh* him and *ſanctify* him with the Holy Ghoſt that he might be *delivered from his wrath* (even before he could ſpeak, or diſcern good or evil) and received into the ark of Chriſt's church? And upon what elſe, but a preſumption of the efficacy of baptiſm to reſtoreth e *infant* from the puniſhment of original ſin, does the prieſt ground his aſſurance, and give the ſame hope to the ſponſors, that God will receive that *preſent* infant, that he will embrace him with the *arms of his mercy*, will give unto him the bleſſing of eternal life, and make him partaker of his everlaſting kingdom? and what anſwer does our church catechiſm give to the queſtion—What is the inward and ſpiritual grace? Is it not—A death unto ſin, and a new birth unto righteouſneſs, for being *by nature born in ſin and children of wrath*, we are hereby made the CHILDREN OF GRACE?

§ 17. That our church cannot *reaſonably* be underſtood to reſolve this inherent delinquency in our nature to an *imputed guilt* from Adam, I have already ſhewn in my comment on her ninth article; and have proved from ſcripture, and the nature and tenor of the goſpel diſpenſation, that men are from their birth, and in their *natural unregenerate* ſtate, children of wrath, and under the power and dominion of *Satan*——and if, from what has already been ſaid upon this point, this complex calamity in man ſhould appear to be the reſult of a prior aſſociation with the apoſtate powers, ſhall the want of a *conſciouſneſs* of the ſeveral *circumſtances* of the ſuppoſed *lapſe*, which, in the nature of things is not, as I have ſhewn above, *poſſible*, be deemed a ſufficient warrant for the *diſbelief* of the hypotheſis, in oppoſition to ſcripture, reaſon, and the opinion of the moſt rational and approved writers, Heathen, Jewiſh, and Chriſtian philoſophers, &c.?

§ 18. And

§ 18. And reader, as I doubt not of your having diſcernment enough to conceive rightly the force of an argument, let me aſk you this queſtion—Have any of us any *conſciouſneſs* of *our* being the *offspring of Heaven*, and *candidates* for a future immortality? Does not our belief of thoſe truths ariſe *ſolely* from reaſon, and a *rational* interpretation of Scripture? And is any *ſtronger* evidence appealed to, in proof of a God, the immortality of the ſoul, or of a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments? And if that *original* guilt charged upon us in Scripture, is in reality derived from our *firſt parents*, and if it is not it muſt ariſe from ſome prior perſonal treſpaſſes, how comes it to paſs, that there are millions in the world, who, ſo far from having a *conſciouſneſs* of ſuch *ſuppoſed* truth in their minds, treat, on the contrary, with the utmoſt deriſion and deteſtation, the *extraordinary* doctrine?

§ 19. And then, *ſecondly*, that a *conſciouſneſs* of paſt tranſactions is not eſſentially neceſſary for the reformation of a being degraded for ſuch tranſactions, which the objection ſuppoſes, the caſe of Nebuchadnezzar (not to mention any other argument at preſent) clearly evinces.—What *conſciouſneſs* had he of that wretched condition to which he was reduced, or the crimes from which it reſulted; when, as Scripture informs us, he *was driven from men, and did eat graſs as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of Heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles feathers, and his nails like birds claws? At the end of the days*, we find, when his ſeven years degradation was at an end, he lifted up his eyes unto Heaven, and his underſtanding returned unto him, and he bleſſed the moſt High, and praiſed and honoured him that liveth for ever.

§ 20. Now whether there was, or was not, an actual tranſformation of the monarch into the form of a beaſt, it is not eſſential to the point in queſtion to determine; it being ſufficient to obſerve, that

that his *heart*, or the ſtate of his *mind*, was *changed* from a *man's* heart, and a *beaſt's heart* was given him *; and without any apparent *conſciouſneſs* of either his degradation, or the guilt for which it was the deſtined puniſhment, a proper remorſe for his former pride, vanity, and ſelf-ſufficiency, was the happy conſequence. And I am in no kind of doubt but that a *retroſpective ſcene* of paſt tranſactions, will hereafter, in conſequence of a conſiſtent pre-concerted plan, be laid open to all thoſe who have travelled through this

* This *tranſfiguration* of Nebuchadnezzar, for *former crimes*, ſeems intended to ſhadow out to us the nature and circumſtances of the brute creation.

That brutes are endowed with ſome degree of reaſon and reflection, and a ſenſibility of pain, as well as pleaſure, there is no kind of doubt with men of reaſon and reflection. Nor is it leſs evident and unqueſtionable that the latter, viz. pain, is frequently over-balanced by the former. What exquiſite, what affecting tortures, do many of them, that moſt excellent and ſerviceable one the horſe, in particular, endure, (though ſome few of them meet with, perhaps, a more friendly fate) from ſome mercileſs, callous-hearted monſter, a maſter! How frequently to the pangs of hunger, and a diſtempered body, are added the moſt cutting ſtripes and ſcourges, moſt liberally and oftimes moſt wantonly dealt out by an inhuman driver, or ſome human brute its rider! And all this perhaps for not effecting impoſſibilities—But wherefore all this wretchedneſs? Wherefore all theſe agonizing pains and miſeries heaped on an helpleſs offspring of Divine Providence? Are they not fleſh and blood? Do *they* not, as well as *we*, know what ſorrow means? And were they brought into a painful exiſtence for nought but the ſervice, or rather, for little elſe than to gratify the pride, the wantonneſs, the cruelty of man?—What! one being created under the *foreſeen* certainty of its being made *miſerable* ſolely for the uſe or pleaſure of another!

I conſider them, in ſhort, as creatures labouring under a ſeverer ſtroke of divine juſtice, than the human race experiences, in conſequence of their having brought upon themſelves an heavier load of guilt, among the apoſtate powers, pre-ordained, however, to make their appearance, ſooner or later, on ſome ſtage of moral agency, probationary, of courſe, for future felicity, as is the preſent ſtate of man. That ſuch a procedure of Divine Providence will take place, I have not the leaſt ſhadow of doubt †. Nor can

† It occurred to me *on a ſudden*, from a reviſal of the *proof*, containing theſe reflections, that if any one of *opulency* would eſtabliſh a *Lecture* in *favor* of the *brute* creation in general, and as leſſons of *inſtruction* to thoſe under whoſe power they occaſionally come, he would immortalize himſelf by an act, which would do the greateſt honor imaginable to the *man* and the *Chriſtian*.

this vale of misery, *irreminiscent* of the country from which they *came*, which will be productive at last of every desirable advantage.

OBJECTION III.

§ 21. But still, say you, when I pass through the streets of this great metropolis, or travel into different countries, what multitudes of the human race appear with a complacency of countenance, which, so far from testifying any inward consciousness of a *prior* guilt, forbids our entertaining the least suspicion of their being chargeable with any thing of that kind! And, should it be told them, that they had not only lived in a prior state, but were detruded into this lower world, as a kind of disinherited offspring of Heaven, and ad-

can the present *unfavourable* partiality of Providence towards them be accounted for, but upon that hypothesis.

Should it be urged, that the assigning souls to one part of the brute creation will reduce us to the necessity of supposing the *like* to actuate the most minute species of vital nature also, I would wish the speculative and philosophic part of mankind to consider, that there is discernible to the microscopic eye as just and due proportioned disposition of organs, fibres, &c. in the one as in the other.—That again, the soul has the power of self-contraction to an infinitessimal degree, as well as that of self-dilatation—that supposing, in the next place, every organized body, as well in the brute creation as in the rational, to be allotted *temporary* prison for a *predelinquent* soul, it is easy to conceive how, and why, *some* may be made prisoners here more at large, as we say, and entrusted with privileges and faculties more numerous, extensive, and exalted than others; and that, lastly, it is impossible to say into how many different kinds of vehicles a soul may transmigrate, e're its *plastic faculty* be refined enough to inform one wherein to perform the functions of an *intelligent* and rational life ‡.

‡ But St. Cyprian's observation upon the point is, methinks, no bad one.

Should I deny, says he, that flies, beetles, wood-lice, glow-worms, mites, moths, are the work of the Almighty, it will not necessarily be required of me to say who made them, who appointed them. I may without offence, surely, say that I know not from whence they came--He does not however take upon him to say they are not *animated* beings. Si negemus muscas, scarabæos, & cimices, nitedulas, curculiones, & tineas omnipotentis esse opus regis, non sequitur postulatum a nobis est ut quis ea fecerit instituritq; dicamus---Possimus nulla reprehensione nescire quis & illis originem dederit. St. Cyp. Adverſ. Gen:. l. 2. p. 34.

herents to the prince of darkneſs; how few are there who would not fire with indignation at the horrid report?

When again we view the anointed of Heaven, kings of the earth, and all others who bear rule in the ſeveral parts of the world; perſons conſecrated to religious purpoſes, powers and pre-eminences, prelates and their ſubordinate dignitaries in the church, the venerable miniſters of juſtice, and men of *eminence* in every order and profeſſion—ſhall theſe, ſay you, be looked upon as *beings* ſunk down by the weight of a *pre-exiſtent* guilt? Is this, in any degree, credible?—And ſhall we dare to view *majeſty* itſelf in ſo unfavourable, ſo uncomfortable a light? And are all—even all---princes, prelates, peaſants, pedlars, in the eye of Deity, on one and the ſame ignominious level?

§ 22. In anſwer to theſe queries I muſt, in the firſt place, obſerve, that the *marvelouſneſs* of a doctrine is not, of itſelf, a ſufficient foundation for a *diſbelief* of it, it being no uncommon thing for errors to be admitted for truths, *only* becauſe they are *popular*, or *eſtabliſhed* errors, which the many ſucceſſive deviations from *old* received *ſyſtems*, eccleſiaſtical or civil, ſpeculative or philoſophic, abundantly evince; and that therefore *novelty* is as likely to have truth on its ſide as *antiquity* *.

§ 23. I muſt, in the ſecond place, deſire the reader to give due attention to what has been already obſerved; that, even ſuppoſing our

* Error is old, ſays a Greek father, therefore truth ſeemeth new—παλαια δε η πλανη, καινον δε αληθεια. Clem. προτρεπτ. P. m. 4. Antiquiora, inquitis, noſtra ſunt, ſays Arnobius, ac per hoc fidei & veritatis pleniſſima—Quaſi verò errorum non antiquitas pleniſſima mater ſit—We have antiquity, ſay you, on our ſide, and, in conſequence, faith eſtabliſhed upon abſolute certainty—As if antiquity was not a moſt fertile mother of errors of various kinds. Arnob. Adverſ. Gent. l. 1. p. 34.

The

our deſcent hither to be the reſult of a pre-exiſtent guilt, it does not therefore follow, either that all of us are criminal in the ſame reſpect, nor even any of us upon a footing with the apoſtate angels, or, in an equal degree, objects of the divine diſpleaſure. But that Scripture in expreſs terms fixes upon *all*, *majeſty* itſelf not excepted, an original inherent guilt and depravity of nature, the reader will not, I apprehend, diſpute; and as the honour and equity of God, and the credit, dignity and authority of our religion, require this queſtion fairly to be diſcuſſed, viz. whether Scripture aſcribes that original guilt, &c. to the *imputed* treſpaſſes of our firſt parents, or to a perſonal *pre-exiſtent* default in ourſelves, let reaſon, the grand criterion of truth, and the only infallible interpreter of Scripture doctrines, determine the point, and my hypotheſis will not appear, perhaps, more *marvellous* than manly, rational, and, I will add, *unqueſtionably* true.

§ 24. And then, thirdly, though the high honours, pre-eminences and powers, to which many by birth, others by a ſeries of fortunate events, arrive, may, from a ſuperficial view of things, induce us to conſider the gay glittering proprietors, rather as peculiar *favourites* of Heaven, than *lapſed* apoſtates from his power and authority; yet how very ill grounded ſuch a concluſion very often is, experience too frequently proves. Many of the *fancied bleſſings* of life are oftimes given in the Deity's wrath, and in order

The imputation of the charge of novelty is a terrible charge, ſays Mr. Locke, amongſt thoſe who judge of men's heads as they do of their perukes—by the faſhion, and can allow none to be right but the received doctrines. Truth ſcarce ever carried it by the vote any where at its *firſt* appearance—new opinions are always ſuſpected, and uſually oppoſed, without any other reaſon but becauſe they are not already common. But truth, like gold, is not the leſs ſo for being newly brought out of the mint. 'Tis trial and examination muſt give price, and not antique faſhion; and though it be not current by the public ſtamp, yet it may be, for all that, as old as nature. Locke's pref. to 1ſt vol. of Eſſay on Human Underſtanding.

to ſhew how equally contemptible, in his ſight, are both the receiver and the gift. Nor could Providence more effectually convince the world what a ſhare of pride, vanity, cruelty, want of feeling for the diſtreſſes of others, &c. lodged in the heart of ſome, than by heaping on them riches, or inveſting them with power and authority!—In many others, indeed, we cannot help conſidering them as tokens of the divine favour, and rewards of a prior *comparative* degree of merit. And though *royalty*, in particular, bears too frequently the image of the *ruler of this world*, the prince of the powers of *darkneſs*, yet (as it does *now*, in an *unuſual* degree on the inhabitants of *this* iſle) it ſometimes ſhines with the ineffable glories of piety, purity, and *ſteady patriotiſm*. Majeſty ſo arrayed beſpeaks an original ſuperior to the common race of *lapſed* beings, and almoſt tempts the inferior claſs of mortals to ſay, of perſonages *ſo dignified*, "The gods are come down to us, in the likeneſs of men."—And when riches and honours are beſtowed on others, whoſe delight it is to employ them to the comfort and happineſs of their fellow creatures, there is no doubt but that Providence *ſingled* them out as perſons moſt *worthy* to be entruſted with the happy *opportunity* of doing good.

OBJECTION IV.

It may ſtill be urged, that this world is ſo far from being a ſtate of puniſhment and excluſion from *happineſs*, which the doctrine of a lapſe of human ſouls in a ſtate of pre-exiſtence ſuppoſes, that, upon the whole, it is productive of public and private happineſs in great abundance.

With reſpect to the firſt, viz. *public* happineſs, and to that *Canaan* of felicity which *Britons* enjoy, compared with others, it may, perhaps, be deemed (and I wiſh we were ſufficiently *ſenſible* of the dif-

difference) what the objection ſuppoſes. Heaven be praiſed, we have none of the miſeries under which other nations are oftimes labouring! Ours is not now the horrid ſeat of war; nor are plagues, peſtilences, fiery eruptions, and devouring earthquakes, the deſolating horrors of this our Sion; no galling oppreſſions of tyrants, no rude and ſavage barbarities exiſt amongſt us—But are not theſe the miſeries, under which groan, more or leſs, a great, I may ſay, the far greateſt part of the inhabitants of *this* globe?

§ 25. Carry we then ourſelves into a view of detached pictures of the world, and what are the moſt exalted gratifications here, when contraſted with that portion of bliſs which we have forfeited, and to which we can be reſtored by Chriſtianity only? Are they more than ſo many play-things in the hands of children, far ſhort of manly enjoyments, and of a rational and ample fruition? And if to theſe we add the incidental misfortunes, diſquietudes, and deep calamities of life, can we be ſaid to enjoy a ſtate of happineſs? Is it not at beſt but a life of diſſatisfaction?

Behold the picture of life—

——————Happier man!
He calls his wiſh, it comes—he ſends it back,
And ſays he call'd another; that *arriving*
Meets the ſame welcome——yet he ſtill calls on,
Till one calls him who varies *not his call,*
But holds him faſt, in chains of darkneſs bound,
Till nature dies and judgment ſets him free——
A freedom far leſs welcome than his chain.

YOUNG'S NIGHT THOUGHTS, p. 4.

§ 26. I am

§ 26. "I am apt to think, ſays Mr. Woollaſton, with reſpect to private felicity, that, even among thoſe whoſe ſtate is beheld with envy, there are *many* who, if at the end of their courſe they were put to their option, whether, without any reſpect to a future ſtate, they would repeat all the pleaſures they have had in life, upon condition to go over again alſo all the diſappointments, the ſame vexations and unkind treatment from the world, the ſame ſecret pangs and tedious hours, the ſame labours of the body and mind, the ſame pains and ſickneſſes, would be far from accepting them at that price. But here the caſe, as I have put it, only reſpects them who may be reckoned among the more *fortunate paſſengers*; and for one that makes his voyage ſo well, thouſands are toſt in tempeſts and loſt.

How many never attain any comfortable ſettlement in the world? How many fail, after they have attained it, by various misfortunes? What melancholy, what diſtractions are cauſed in families, by inhuman or vicious huſbands; falſe or peeviſh wives; refractory or unhappy children; and if they are otherwiſe, if they are good, what ſorrow for the loſs of them? How many are forced by neceſſity upon drudging and very ſhocking employments, for a poor livelihood? How many ſubſiſt upon begging, borrowing, and other ſhifts, nor can do otherwiſe? How many meet with ſad accidents, or fall into deplorable diſeaſes? Are not all companies, and the very ſtreets, filled with complaints and grievances and doleful ſtories? I verily believe, that a great part of mankind may aſcribe their deaths to want and dejection." Woollaſton's Rel. Nat. p. 207.

§ 27. Allowing therefore what cannot be denied, that there are many in life who experience a continued ſeries of comforts, conveniences, and real enjoyments, yet let us ever bear in mind the view with which they are vouchſafed by the Almighty, and on what account?

count? It is certain that a ſuperiority of poſſeſſions, titles, and power, do not happen by mere chance, and with no particular view from *above* reſpecting thoſe to whom they are allotted. A *Paradiſe* was prepared for Adam—for one to whom the Deity *knew* it would be an *undeſerved* bleſſing—And temporal bleſſings were perpetually pouring down on the *peculiar* people of God, a people *peculiar* only for their *ingratitude.* From whence we may conclude, that the ſuppoſed advantages *here* are in general no more than *deſigned trials of a man's behaviour in the poſſeſſion of them*; the particulars of whoſe conduct are repoſed, *unperceived* by the poſſeſſor, in the breaſt of God, to be produced againſt him in the laſt great day of accounts, when it will appear that it had been infinitely more to his *real* advantage never to have been poſſeſſed of them, than to fall then, as he undoubtedly will, under the vengeance of Heaven, for having made ſo unworthy an uſe of them—Conſider this, for your own ſakes, all ye *great* ones; and learn from hence, ye *little* ones, how to eſtimate aright your deſpiſed *littleneſs.*

OBJECTION V.

§ 28. It may be urged, if the ſoul did exiſt in a prior ſtate, that ſuppoſed pre-exiſtence would moſt aſſuredly have been intimated to us in the *Moſaic hiſtory* of the creation; *that* however evidently ſuppoſes the *ſoul* of man, as well as his *body*, to have been then *firſt* formed by the Creator.

That the Moſaic creation was not the original creation, I have, I imagine, proved already, and that the *deſign* of the Moſaic hiſtory accounts for its *ſilence* with reſpect to a lapſe of human ſouls in a pre-exiſtent ſtate, the reader will ſee from what follows.

It

It is certain, ſays St. *Baſil*, that Moſes did not deſign to write of the creation of *all things*, but only of things *viſible* and *corporeal*.

He is wholly ſilent with reſpect to the creation of human ſouls—gives us only an hiſtorical account of the production of terreſtrial animals, and of the Almighty's proviſion for them here—ſpeaks of men in a terreſtrial view only—ſays not a word of the creation of that intellectual part of him, the ſoul, nor of the creation of angels—treats only of *viſibles*—ſuch as the Heaven, the earth, moon, and ſtars, plants, animals, and the like—not of ſuch things as being *immaterial* are diſcernible only by the mind. Menaſſ. Ban. Iſr. Eu. in Gen. p. 21.

Can we wonder then that no notice is taken by Moſes, in his account of the *creation*, of the pre-exiſtence, &c. of human ſouls, when not only theſe, but other matters of the utmoſt importance, are unnoticed by him—the knowledge of God, of his eſſence and attributes, and of the worſhip and ſervice due to him—no mention at all made of the law of nature, written, as is ſuppoſed, in the heart of that lord of the creation, man—no moral philoſophy, no divine morality, nor any of the great rules and precepts of ſobriety, righteouſneſs and godlineſs—nothing of the origin and immortality of the ſoul—nothing relative to its preſent or future felicity—nothing of the end and buſineſs, the holineſs and true happineſs of man—nothing of ſalvation and the way to it—nothing of another world—nothing of either Heaven or hell, or of ſpirituals and eternals. Vid. Brockleſby.

OBJECTION VI.

§ 29. Admitting, for argument ſake, that the entire ſilence in the *pentateuch* concerning a *lapſe of human ſouls in a pre-exiſtent ſtate* is ſufficiently accounted for above, yet ſtill is it not ſtrange, that no *declaration*, no *poſitive* declaration of it ſhould have been made by *Chriſt*, and that his *diſciples* ſhould have been totally ignorant of any ſuch event?

§ 30. I anſwer, why may I not ſuppoſe that our Saviour's ſilence concerning that event aroſe from its not being *diſcredited*? Or that he had the ſame reaſons for being ſilent upon that point, as he had for concealing other matters of moment, which he did from even his diſciples? And do we not find St. Paul, who was *ſeparated unto the goſpel of Chriſt*, acting no leſs upon the reſerve throughout the whole courſe of his miniſtry—either *partially* relating, or purpoſely inveloping, in myſtic types and alluſions, many things relative to the Goſpel diſpenſation?—This is a fact, the truth of which is confirmed by his own expreſs declaration. For though he diſcloſed, from time to time, the *arcana* of the Goſpel œconomy to a ſelect deſerving *few—to them who were perfect*, as he ſays, yet in general he ſpake the *wiſdom of God in a myſtery*. *We ſpeak wiſdom*, ſays he, *among them who* are *perfect*; yet, *not the wiſdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that came to nought*.

But we ſpeak (to the bulk of his hearers he means) *the wiſdom of God in a myſtery*.

§ 31. He had before obſerved to the Corinthians, that diſdaining altogether the glittering pomp of eloquence, or a vain oſten-

tatious ſhew of human wiſdom, he had, with the utmoſt plainneſs and ſimplicity of ſpeech, declared to them the *teſtimony of God*; ſolicitous only to inculcate for the preſent, and as a foundation for their further progreſs in the knowledge of Chriſtianity, the belief of *Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.* Some of the more remote, recondite truths, contained in that *belief* (though not all of them, for a reaſon which will hereafter occur) he reſerved for the information *of the perfect*—for the ſincere, humble, rightly *diſpoſed* convert *.

I conclude therefore, that the Apoſtle's *full and thorough inſight* into the nature, tenor, and ſeveral circumſtances of the Goſpel diſpenſation, is not eaſily, if at all, to be collected from what is tranſmitted to us in his epiſtles; in which, as St. Peter ſays, there are ſome things *hard to be underſtood.*

Account, ſays he, *that the long ſuffering of our Lord is ſalvation; even as our brother Paul alſo, according to the wiſdom given unto him, hath written unto you.*

As alſo, in all his epiſtles *ſpeaking in them of theſe things in which are ſome things* hard to be underſtood, 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.

§ 32. That the epiſtle, to which the words εγραψεν υμιν written *unto you*, particularly refers, is that of St. Paul to the He-

* Credendum *omnibus* proponitur Chriſtum mortuum eſſe ut nos e Poteſtate diaboli eriperet. *Perfectis* autem dicitur quo Jure totum humanum genus in Diaboli Poteſtatem fuerit redactum: ac rurſus quo Jure & Æquitate per Chriſti Mortem fuerit inde ereptum. And again, as a comment on *We ſpeak the wiſdom of God in a myſtery*, it is added—Sapientiam Dei quæ abſcondita eſt, id eſt Concilia divinæ ſapientiæ, quæ Deus eſſe voluit abſcondita & ante Filii ſui Paſſionem pauciſſimis revelata, loquimur & docemus *non propalam & paſſim apud omnes* (quia non *omnes* ea capiunt) ſed in Myſterio & apud *pauciores*. Vin. Eſtium in Loco.

brews;

brews*; and not, as is uſually judged to the ſecond chapter of his epiſtle to the Romans, the learned Eſtius has, I think, proved beyond diſpute. Nor is it leſs evident that St. Peter alludes not to this or that *particular paſſage*, in that epiſtle to the Hebrews, but to the whole thread of reaſoning (the major part of it however) therein contained; and further, that the obſcurity which he aſcribes to that epiſtle in particular, he ſuppoſes to be applicable likewiſe to all his epiſtles in general.

As alſo in all his epiſtles ſpeaking in them of thoſe things, &c. in *which* εν οις (not εν αις, as ſome copies erroneouſly have it) in which *epiſtles* are ſome things *hard* to be *underſtood*,

From which paſſage the ſame judicious commentator draws the following inference. It is abundantly evident, ſays he, that St. Peter affirms, that there are in St. Paul's epiſtles things hard to be underſtood; and at the ſame time that it is a common thing for the other Scriptures, as well as St. Paul's epiſtles, to be miſinterpreted and perverted by the unlearned †.

§ 33. The reader is not however to infer from hence, that in the Δυσνοητα aſcribed to St. Paul's epiſtles—the *things hard to be underſtood*, the neceſſary indiſpenſable credenda of a Chriſtian, truths, the belief of which is eſſential to ſalvation, are included—the contrary being abundantly evident. A lively *operative* faith in Chriſt, as the redeemer of mankind, which is the very baſis, nay, and even the ſum and ſubſtance of Chriſtianity, is not only the plain *obvious*

* And principally to the eleventh chapter of that epiſtle, according to Dr. Hammond.

† Apertiſſimum eſt hoc Petri Teſtimonium in iis quæ ſcripſit Paulus eſſe quædam intellectu difficilia; ſimul indicans et cæteris Scripturis id eſſe commune quod et eas ſicut Paulo Scripta depravent Homines indocti. Vid. Eſtium in Loco.

object of the Apoſtle's miniſtry, but a conſtant topic of exhortation throughout his whole epiſtles. A faith, which (actuated and enlivened, I ſay, by a correſpondent purity of life) has given, I doubt not, all who have lived and died therein, an unqueſtioned paſſport to the regions of bliſs; incapable as they were of fathoming *the depth of the riches of the wiſdom and goodneſs of God*, diſplayed in the great work of man's redemption, of framing to themſelves any idea of an atonement *due* to a pre-exiſtent ſtate of guilt, or of conceiving that a bleſſing, greater or more extenſive, was accompliſhed by Chriſt's mediation, interceſſion, &c *. than a deliverance from the evils conſequent on Adam's treſpaſs.

But to return to the objection: I again aſk, in anſwer to it, where does our Saviour give the leaſt intimation that he came to redeem us as mortals who had *lapſed* in *Adam*? Of the *conſequences* of the firſt tranſgreſſion there is not one word ſpoken from the third of Geneſis to the laſt chapter of Malachi. David, Solomon, and the prophets, ſay nothing clearly or certainly about them. Our Saviour ſaith not one word about them in any of his doctrines, his inſtructions, or ſermons, nor any of the Apoſtles and writers of the New Teſtament, except St. Paul, and he but thrice. Vid. Taylor's Orig. Sin.

If however our Saviour did not give his diſciples *clear* intimations of a *prior* lapſe, he declined doing it, moſt probably, becauſe he knew that important topic of enquiry, in after times, the SPIRIT OF TRUTH would, by due degrees, lead men into a diſcovery of *that* event, among many other important truths, reſpecting the mediatorial œconomy,

* That the *death* of Chriſt was made a *condition* of our redemption, or that *it* was any thing more than a *contingent* conſequence of his miniſtry (and as ſuch *foreſeen*, *propheſied*, and *prefigured* of old, and alluded to in the Moſaic rites and ſacrifices, &c.) it is neither eaſy of belief, nor capable, I think, of Scripture proof—But here let every one judge for himſelf.

which

which neither the world was then *capable* of receiving, or he himſelf *at liberty* openly to diſcloſe—That they are, however, the leſs credible from the want of an expreſs poſitive declaration from the Apoſtle, we ſhould not haſtily conclude, when we conſider (and I hope the conſideration will have its due weight) that the Apoſtle was, by virtue of that extraordinary viſion, vouchſafed to him—2 Cor. xii.—undoubtedly poſſeſſed of a fuller and more intimate knowledge of the myſteries of the Goſpel diſpenſation, than he was permitted to *make known*. And that the diſcoveries then made were ſuch as ſerved greatly to exalt the dignity of the Chriſtian œconomy, it ſeems evident, from the exceſs of vanity to which the communication of them had well-nigh drove the Apoſtle, and on account of which the meſſenger of Satan was ſent to buffet him.

That thoſe diſcoveries *did* relate to a pre-exiſtent guilt, and a redemption from it by the death of Chriſt, there is indeed no actual proof from Scripture. But whether the purpoſes of the mediatorial diſpenſation are not tranſcendantly *exalted* when viewed through the medium of a ſuppoſed perſonal *prior* lapſe of ſouls, inſtead of a derived *Adamic* treſpaſs and defilement, let the judicious, ſerious, and impartial reader determine.

§ 34. But as a farther more direct and full anſwer to the above objection, I will give the reader another extract from that valuable tract, the New Practice of Piety—

I am not ſtartled, ſays he, that I find not Chriſt nor any of his apoſtles aſſerting, or ſo much as mentioning any ſuch doctrine (the doctrine of pre-exiſtence). St. John's hyperbole in the laſt verſe of his Goſpel, ſatisfies me, that I muſt not expect to find all that our Saviour did and ſaid, regiſtered by the evangeliſts. And St. Paul's frequent exhortation, to hold faſt the tradition that he had imparted

to

to them, whether by word or epiſtle, convinces me, that it is not unreaſonable to conclude, that he delivered many doctrines in his ſermons, which he had no occaſion to mention in his letters to the church, among which this might be one. However, it is a ſufficient warrant to my belief, that I no where, in all the Scriptures, can find this doctrine reprehended; which, had it been an error, could not have eſcaped the cenſure of Chriſt and his apoſtles, it being the univerſal tenet of all ſorts of Jews except the Sadducees. When I conſider that Origen and Ammonius taught it in the ſchools of Alexandria (Plotinus himſelf learning it from the latter,) and that all the primitive fathers, who were Platoniſts, aſſerted it not only as a philoſophical, but alſo as a divine truth; I look upon it as an effect of Gothic barbarity and ignorance, which afterwards overſpread all *Chriſtendom*, that neither this, nor hardly any other point of Platoniſm, were countenanced in the Chriſtian ſchools.

Here, reader, pauſe a while, and conſider ſeriouſly whether a doctrine ſo ſupported by the opinion of the moſt learned and ingenious, not only in the preſent but in every age paſt, a doctrine to which reaſon gives ſo immediate an aſſent, and Scripture, when fairly interpreted, ſeems to point out to us as the ground-work of the Goſpel diſpenſation—conſider, I ſay, whether a doctrine ſo favourably circumſtanced as this is, can, with any degree of propriety, be rejected by the rational man and Chriſtian—eſpecially when you take into conſideration the many advantages to which it may be applied, ſome of which ſhall be the ſubject of the following chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

An APPLICATION of the Whole.

APPLICATION I.

§ 1. FROM the view which we have taken of a ſuppoſed lapſe of human ſouls in a ſtate of pre-exiſtence, there opens to the intellectual eye an entire conſiſtency in that grand landſcape of nature, man's terreſtrial abode; and the whole courſe of divine providence towards him, from the creation of the world, to its preſent ſtate.

It enables us in the firſt place, to ſee in what manner, and with what advantageous views reſpecting man, *natural* and *moral* evil came into the world.

§ 2. Upon an exalted ſcheme of compaſſion for undone creatures; to introduce into a ſtate of trial, and probation, a ſelect number of the lapſed race, ſnatched, as it were, from the jaws of the great Dragon, and to enable them to recover, if they pleaſed, their forfeited happineſs, Adam was ſent into the world in the manner and form deſcribed by the ſacred hiſtorian. And, though created after God's image, i. e. with ſuch intellectual powers and faculties, as are in nature, though not in degree reſembling thoſe, by which the infinite and eternal mind is governed*, yet we find him here accompanied

* When Moſes ſays, "God created man in his own image," we muſt conſider the image of God in the Old Teſtament notion of it; and it cannot be ſhewn that

accompanied with that inſtability, and depravity of nature which he had acquired by his departure from original rectitude *above*— And here, if infinite mercy had not interpoſed, the laſt ſtate of man had been worſe than the *firſt**.

§ 3. Myriads of the fallen race were to iſſue from his loins. He was to introduce them into a new probatory ſcene of action, was to

that the image of God in the Old Teſtament, ever ſignifies the divine, *virtuous* image of God. No ſuch notion of it appears in the Old Teſtament, but on the contrary, mankind conſidered as merely *animal* are ſuppoſed to *bear God's image*:

Whoſo ſheddeth man's blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed: for in the image of God made he man. Gen. ix. 6.

So alſo in the New Teſtament.

Therewith curſe we men, that are made after the ſimilitude of God. James iii. 9.

For a man ought not to cover his head, foraſmuch as he is the image and glory of God. I. Cor. xi. 7.

But the image of God in Adam, conſiſted principally in his being a kind of repreſentative lord of the creation. Let us make man, ſays God, in our image, after our likeneſs, and let them have dominion over the fiſh of the ſea, and over the fowls of the air, &c.—in our image, after our likeneſs. i. e. in our ſtead.

* "Even ſuppoſing, ſays Glanville, that Adam had not been a delinquent before "his noted tranſgreſſion in a terreſtrial body, and that his body had vaſt advantages "over ours, in point of beauty, purity, and ſerviceableneſs to the ſoul, what "hardſhip is there in conceiving that God might ſend one of thoſe *immaculate* ſpirits "that he had made, into ſuch a tenement that he might be an overſeer and ruler of "thoſe other creatures, that he had ordered to have their dwelling upon earth. I "am ſure, ſays he, that there is no more contrariety to any of the divine attributes "in this ſuppoſition, than there is in that, which makes God to have ſent a pure "ſpirit, which he had juſt made, into ſuch a body. But then ſuppoſing that ſome "ſouls fell when the angels did, (which he ſhews is no unreaſonable ſuppoſition) "this was a merciful proviſion of our Maker, and a generous undertaking for a "ſeraphic and untainted ſpirit. For by this means, fit and congruous *matter* is "prepared for ſouls to reſide and act in, who had rendered themſelves unfit to live "and enjoy themſelves in more refined bodies. And ſo, thoſe ſpirits that had ſin-"ned themſelves into a ſtate of ſilence, and inactivity, are by this reaſonable means, "which the divine wiſdom and goodneſs hath contrived for that purpoſe, put once more

to become a kind of ſurety for their after conduct, and in conſequence of a *right behaviour* in all, was to bring them back to their former ſtate of glory. But having, together with the mother of mankind, loſt ſight of his duty to his Maker here, by eating the forbidden fruit, he again fell a ſacrifice to the divine vengeance, and involved his unhappy offſpring in the ruinous conſequence.

§ 4. Natural and moral evil then flowed in apace. Now it was that *ſin* entered into the *world*, and that greateſt of *natural* evils, together with its uſual forerunners, bodily pains, infirmities, and gradual decays, *death* by ſin; ariſing, not improbably, from a malignant efficacy eſſential to the fruit forbidden *.

§ 5. So that inſtead of being removed (as was the peculiar indulgence vouchſafed to Enoch and Elijah) by a *direct* tranſlation from earth to the region of pure ſpirits, which would have been the caſe

" more into a capacity of acting their parts anew, and coming into play again. " Now if it ſeems hard, continues he, to conceive how ſuch a noble ſpirit, in ſuch " an advantageous body, ſhould have been impoſed upon by ſo groſs a deluſion, and " ſubmit ſo impotently to the firſt temptation, he may pleaſe to conſider that the " difficulty is the ſame, ſuppoſing him juſt then to have been made, if we grant him " but that purity, and thoſe perfections both of will and underſtanding, which or- " thodox theology allows him. Yet I might aſk again, ſays he, what inconve- " nience there is in ſuppoſing, that Adam himſelf was one of thoſe delinquent ſouls " which the divine piety and compaſſion had thus ſet up again; that ſo many of his " excellent creatures might not be loſt and undone irrecoverably; but might act " anew, though upon a lower ſtage, in the univerſe? A due conſideration of the " infinite fœcundity of divine goodneſs, ſays he, will, if not warrant, yet excuſe " ſuch a ſuppoſition." Vid. Glanville's Lux Orientalis, p. 31, 32.

* Before Adam had eaten the forbidden fruit, a divine beauty and majeſty was ſhed upon his body, ſuch as could neither be eclipſed by ſickneſs, nor extinguiſhed by death: nature was his phyſician, and prudence and abſtinence would have kept him healthful to immortality. Stack. Hiſt. Bib. 1. ii. 2. p. 37.

moſt probably, if he, on whom our *terrene* fate depended, had not ſinned *here*, we have now the mortification to find that our paſſage to it muſt be through the dark chambers of the grave; and that through a kind of phyſical neceſſity. For the ſame frail periſhable body which Adam contracted by his tranſgreſſion, deſcending of courſe to his *poſterity*, nothing but a miraculous interpoſition of divine power, an immediate renovation of the protoplaſt's corporeal frame, could prevent this from being the unhappy conſequence *.

In ſhort, that *condemnation* to death, which God paſſed upon Adam for his diſobedience, became *hereditary* to his whole offspring, and would have been *fixed* and *irreverſible*, but that——*As in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive*——ſhall, by the all-ſufficient merits of him who died for our ſins, and roſe again for our juſtification, through faith in his blood, and the added efficacy of a well ſpent life, riſe to the life immortal, enter into the joy of our Lord, and be reſtored at length to the favour of God, which we had forfeited by our *prior* perſonal treſpaſſes and ſins, and on account of which we were made ſharers in the penalty

* Agreeably to which, ſays the author of the book of Wiſdom, God created man to be immortal, but through the envy of the Devil, death entered into the world. Wiſd. xxiii. 24. And again—By the woman was the beginning of ſin, ſays the wiſe ſon of Sirach, and by her we all die. Eccl. xxv. 2. By the counſel which the ſerpent gave to Eve, all the inhabitants of the earth became obnoxious to death, ſays the Targum, on Ruth iv. ver. ult. And the ſame Chaldee paraphraſe upon Eccleſ. ch. vii. ver. ult. ſays, God made man pure and upright, but the Serpent and Eve ſeduced him to eat of the fruit of the tree, and ſo they made death to ruſh in upon him, and all the inhabitants of the earth.

It ſeems to be no ill-grounded conjecture of ſome, that the forbidden tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, brought forth fruit the reverſe of that which was produced by the tree of life. And they take this tree to have been of the nature of that Indian fig deſcribed by Pliny, whoſe fruit was ſweeter than an apple, but of a juice moſt baneful to the human conſtitution; for which reaſon Alexander, in his expedition, gave ſtrict orders that none of his army ſhould touch that fruit. Plin. Hiſt. l. 12. ch. 6.

inflicted

inflicted on Adam, viz. death—St. Paul declaring, plainly and poſitively, that we ſhare that part of the puniſhment, inflicted on Adam's tranſgreſſion, only by having been ourſelves ſinners in a prior ſtate—Death paſſed on all men, ſays he, for that, or *becauſe* that (εφ' ω *eo quod*, or as Eraſmus renders it, *quatenus*) all *had* ſinned.

§ 6. That this is the true import of that paſſage, we learn from the Apoſtle's drift throughout the whole chapter; which is to amplify or illuſtrate the merit of the redemption of the world by Chriſt. In order therefore to obviate any plea, that might perhaps be urged in behalf of the deſcendants of Adam, as ſuppoſed to be innocently, and as ſuch wrongfully involved in the conſequences of his guilt, and of courſe *intitled* to a redemption from death and deſtruction, he takes upon him to convince them, that, incapable as they were of incurring the *guilt* for which Adam died, yet, having been *before perſonally* ſinners themſelves, *they* ſhared, not unjuſtly, the puniſhment inflicted on *him*.

As by one man ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin, *even* ſo (for that is the true meaning of και ουτως) *even* ſo death paſſed upon all men *for* or *becauſe* that all *had ſinned*.

§ 7. The more common tranſlation of the paſſage is arrant nonſenſe.

Wherefore, *as* by one man ſin entered into the world, and death by ſin, and ſo death paſſed upon all men, foraſmuch as all have ſinned.—Well, and what then? Why nothing at all follows to make the ſenſe complete, even allowing a parentheſis to extend as far as you pleaſe. In what ſenſe then all *had ſinned*, we learn

from the ſcope of the Apoſtle's reaſoning throughout the whole chapter.

Doubtleſs one will ſcarce die, ſays he, for a *righteous* man, i. e. for one, who being *perſonally* righteous, could ſtand in no *need* of a redeemer; yet for a *good man*—one from whom ſome *good* may have been received—it may be that one might even dare to die. *But herein is God's love manifeſted towards us*, ſays he, *in that while we were ſinners*, neither *juſt* nor *good* (in a ſtate of *original* ſin moſt undoubtedly, for the *Apoſtles* and other *believers in Chriſt*, could not be ſuppoſed to be then labouring under a continued courſe of ſin *here*) *while we were yet ſinners*, Chriſt died for us. And in order to *ſhew* that it was a *guilt* contracted in a *prior* ſtate for which Chriſt died, the Apoſtle reaſons as follows—

§ 8. *Unto the time of the law*, ſays he, *was ſin in the world, but ſin is not imputed while there is no law. But death reigned from Adam to Moſes, even over them alſo, that ſinned not after the manner of the tranſgreſſion of Adam, who was the figure of him that was to come*, i. e. ſin was in the world prior to the law, [αχρι νομυ, *uſque ad Legem*] but to what law? To the law given by God to Adam, or to that delivered to Moſes? Not to the latter aſſuredly, becauſe ſin *was* imputed *before* the Moſaic law commenced *. Witneſs the ſentence of death executed upon Adam and the ſucceeding race; the puniſhment inflicted on Cain; the deſtruction of the world by a general deluge; the judicial confuſion at the building of the *Tower of Babel*; the overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*; the fate of *Lot*'s wife; *Simeon* and *Levi*'s revenge on *Hamor*, and *Shechem*

* Εβασιλευσεν ο Θανατος κατα του αυτου Παυλον υ τινων και τινων δε υ—αλλ' απο Αδαμ (και) μεκρι Μωσεως αν ην Αβελ και ενος και ο λοιπος των εν τω νομω δικαιων και προφητων χορος. φ. Παρ. κα τω Ζοροαστρ λογ.

for

for the rape committed on *Dinah*; and the multiplied judgments on *Pharaoh*, and on the people of the land of *Egypt*.

§ 9. By the law therefore, prior to which ſin entered in the world, and to which the Apoſtle muſt be ſuppoſed to allude, we muſt undoubtedly underſtand the *law of God given to Adam*. And as the puniſhment for ſin was inflicted even on thoſe who had not been tranſgreſſors of *that* law, where could *thoſe ſufferers* have been tranſgreſſors, but in a *prior* ſtate, for *ſin is not imputed where there is no law*. Yet death [the wages of ſin] *reigned from Adam to Moſes even over them* that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of Adam's tranſgreſſion, *who was the image of him that was to come*, i. e. who, by involving *prior* treſpaſſers in the miſeries denounced on *his* perſonal tranſgreſſions *here*, of which the principal is a frail, corruptible, *mortal* body, bore a kind of contradiſtinct reſemblance of him, who gave them an undeſerved ſhare in the benefits ariſing to mankind by the *merit* of his own perſonal atonement for ſin in general. And ſo it is that—*By man came death*, and that *by man came alſo the reſurrection of the dead*: So it is that---*As in Adam all die, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive* *.

§ 10. And that the other intermediate evils (*natural* evils I mean) ariſe from the ſame ſource, Scripture aſſures us in expreſs terms †.

Curſed

* If however it ſhould be inſiſted on, that the Apoſtle alludes not to the law given by God to Adam, but to the law of Moſes, I don't ſee but my argument is of equal force notwithſtanding; it being evident from the Apoſtle's own words, that *before* the latter, there was a ſin *not* imputed, and what could that be but men's original pre-exiſtent ſin, when, as we have obſerved above, *other* ſins were actually imputed and puniſhed.

† "It is evident, that evil ought to be prevented if it be poſſible, and that it is a "ſinful thing not to prevent it when it can be prevented. Nevertheleſs, our theology ſhews

Curſed is the ground for his ſake; in ſorrow do we eat of it, more or leſs, *all the days of our life; thorns alſo, and thiſtles it brings forth; and we eat of the herb of the field; in the ſweat of our brow* * *we eat bread, till we return to the ground; for out of it we were taken. Duſt we are, and unto duſt we muſt return.* And it was not *mankind* only which felt the ſad effects of the introduction of ſin, but even the inanimate part of the creation ſuffered by it. The fertility of the earth and ſerenity of the air were changed; the elements began to jar, the ſeaſons and the weather grew uncertain †. Milton introduces God, ſoon after the fall, appointing Angels to make an alteration in the courſe of celeſtial bodies, and to poſſeſs them with noxious qualities, in order to deſtroy the fertility of the earth, on account of man's diſobedience.

———————*The ſun*
Had firſt his precept ſo to move, ſo ſhine,
As might affect the earth with cold and heat
Scarce tolerable, *and from the north to call*
Decrepit Winter, from the ſouth to bring
Solſtitial Summer's heat. MILT. X. 951.

" ſhews us, that this is falſe; it teaches us, that God does nothing but what be-
" comes his perfections, when he permits all the diſorders that are in the world, and
" which he might have prevented." This is part of a conference between two Abbots which Mr. Bayle introduces into his account of the life of Pyrroh; wherein a reflection is caſt upon the Deity, in permitting the *introduction* and continuance of *evil* in the world, which is ſufficiently removed by ſuppoſing it the reſult of a lapſe of ſouls in a pre-exiſtent ſtate.

* Some conclude from hence, that the earth, before the fall, brought forth ſpontaneouſly—And indeed, in ſome meaſure, it is true, ſince all things were produced at firſt by divine power, in full perfection, without toil or labour. Gen. i. 11, 12. But what labour would have been neceſſary in time, we know not, only the words imply, that much *leſs* toil would, in that caſe, have been requiſite. See Patr. in Loco. Other commentators obſerve, that by the ſweat of our brow is underſtood all manner of labour, whether of the body or the brain. Eccleſ. i. 13. As alſo what is grievous to a man in this life, either to do or ſuffer. See Aſſembly of Divines in Loc.

† Vid. Stackhouſe.

§ 11. Thus the introduction of *natural* evil on account of *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion appears conſiſtent with our ideas of infinite equity and wiſdom; we ſhall ſee now how neceſſarily *moral* evil iſſued from the ſame ſource.

The Jews ſuppoſed, that the body of Adam, before the fall, was not like man's *preſent* frame, but approached to the angelic ſubtlety and purity. *Creatura fuit ſubtiliſſima & puriſſima proxime accedens ad Corpus ſpirituale*. See Brook. p. 464.

§ 12. But this tenuous vehicle of the ſoul, after having imbibed the baneful juice of the forbidden fruit, degenerated by *degrees* into a more groſs and indelicate conſiſtency; whence a group of ſenſual groveling appetites *unuſual*, aroſe of courſe. And as the degenerate nature of Adam's *body* becomes *neceſſarily* hereditary to us, who are his offspring, its concomitant groſs *paſſions* become of courſe *hereditary* too: *Hence that law in our members, warring againſt the law of our mind* *, *and bringing us into captivity to the law of ſin*; hence that *carnal mind, which is enmity againſt God.* Our ſouls are now cloathed with bodies calculated to adminiſter ſuch affections *only*, as are repugnant to, and incompatible with, that purity of mind, to which a *ſpiritual* life only can enable us to attain, and wherein only it is poſſible for us to pleaſe God. This is that life which Adam forfeited by his tranſgreſſion, and his poſterity ſink in the ruins of it. Hence it is, that we are ſtill dead in treſpaſſes and ſins; that in "the midſt of life we are in death."—The glory of the divine image, *before* eclipſed, is *now* more and more clouded and obſcured by *carnal* luſts and paſſions; the ſoul is, as it were, buried in ſinful *fleſh*, and totally unable to riſe again

* Hence it is, that in our form of *baptiſm*, the prieſt ſo devoutly prays, that the *old Adam* in *that* child may "be ſo buried, that the *new* man may be raiſed "up in him."

to

to its *original* ſplendour, till this *corruptible* ſhall have put on *incorruption*, and this *mortal* ſhall have put on *immortality* *.

§ 13. Well, reader—Is there not now exhibited to your view a ſatisfactory account of the introduction of *natural* and *moral* evil into the world †. Does not the *one* appear to be a *deſerved* conſequence of the *other*? Yes, ſay you, provided you ſubſtitute a *pre-exiſtent* guilt for an *Adamic* treſpaſs—I ſhould offer violence to reaſon if I did not—I glory in the idea—and the advantages ariſing from this view of things, are, among others, thoſe which follow.

* I cannot think, with the learned Mr. *Law*, that this perfection of ſoul is at all attainable *here*. Scripture ſpeaks evidently a contrary doctrine. *That which is born of the fleſh is fleſh*, ſays our Saviour; and of courſe (while it continues in the ſame ſtate) is ſinful, i. e. is liable to ſuch paſſions as neceſſarily ſubject it to the law of ſin—that which is born of the ſpirit is ſpirit, i. e. it is pure, uncorrupt, ſinleſs; but ſuch are not we. We are *altogether abominable, there is none that doeth good, no, not one*. He that is of the earth, is earthly, and ſpeaketh of earth. And as fleſh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven, ſo neither can righteouſneſs be reſtored to us *here:* for the king of righteouſneſs himſelf has declared, that his kingdom is not from *hence*; nay, and if we do all we can, it is peremptorily affirmed, that we are ſtill *unprofitable ſervants*. And if perfection was actually to be acquired *here*, how happened it that the *converted* apoſtle could not become poſſeſſed of it? How came it, that there was ſtill that law in his members, warring, &c. and bringing him into captivity to the law of ſin? How, laſtly, came it to paſs, that humanity got the better, *for a time*, over even the divinity of Chriſt—that he was for giving up the cauſe for which he came into the world—was *deſirous*, that, if poſſible, the cup might paſs from him; intimating, in the very act of reſignation to his approaching fate, that he was led to it, not by his *own will*, but by the *will of his Father*—not *my will*, ſays he, but *thine* be done.

† The origin of evil, ſays Brockleſby, has a remarkable congruity in the Moſaic hiſtory; and it is, in the general nature of it, unexceptionable. For it derives the evil of puniſhment from the evil of ſin; and the evil of ſin—from the beginner of ſin, the Devil.

Through envy of the Devil (quem ſub ſerpentis figurâ Moſes intelligi voluit, ſays *Grotius*) came death into the world. And *Pherecydes Syrus* derives his οφιωνευς, *princeps mali*, as Origen thinks, from the Moſaic account of the ſerpent. And *Plato* is ſuppoſed to derive from thence his ſtory of *Jupiter*'s gardens; and of *Porus* circumvented by *Penia*. Vid. C. Celſ. l. 6. p. 304. Item. l. 4. p. 114. Euſeb. præpar. Evang. l. 12. c. 11.

§ 14. It

§14. In the firſt place it affords us a ſtriking memorial of the calamitous effects of ſin, and impiety in general, and of the heinouſneſs of thoſe *prior* offences from whence are derived to us the evils conſequent on *Adam*'s ſin in particular.

§ 15. They are, in the ſecond place, proper medicines to heal our ſpiritual ſickneſs, to correct the peccant humours in our intellectual and moral frame, to check the impetuoſity of our inflamed and unruly appetites, and reduce us to a cool and conſiſtent knowledge of ourſelves and our unhappy condition.

§ 16. When, in the third place, it is ſuppoſed that we came into this world objects of the divine wrath, for ſome *prior* acts of rebellion againſt Heaven, will it be wondered, if we feel, now and then, a ſtroke from the rod of *juſtice*; or that the ſtate into which we are baniſhed for thoſe crimes ſhould be prolific, at times, of corrective difficulties, anxieties, and actual grievances?

APPLICATION II.

The long permitted *ſovereignty* of Satan in this inferior globe, the late appearance of the Meſſiah, and the paſt and preſent ſtate of the heathen world, the non-*univerſality* of the Chriſtian faith and the Scripture doctrine of *election* and *predeſtination*, are all accounted for by this moſt pleaſing hypotheſis.

§ 17. When it ſhall be conſidered, that creatures, baſking *before* in the beams of glory, nay, and even enjoying——

——*Their fill of bliſs on bliſs*—
Imparadis'd in ſocial joys—dropp'd gratitude—

that, inattentive to the laws of juſtice, generoſity, and moral equity, they proſtituted that freedom of will, with which they were entruſted

truſted by their *Maker*, revolted by degrees to the traiterous *rival* of his power and dignity, and fixed their allegiance *there*—Who does not perceive the wiſdom of Divine Providence in conſtituting *him*, who had been their *ſeducer* in a *prior* world, their king and potentate in *this?* that ſo by rendering his *permitted ſovereignty* here ineffectual for accompliſhing any thing but his and their own ruin, the vanity of *his* ambitious enterprizes, and of *their* truſt and confidence in *him*, might be rendered *more conſpicuous*. And what could have operated more effectually to accompliſh the *conſiſtent* deſign, than (which is the *next* particular to be taken into conſideration) the *late* appearance of the promiſed *Meſſiah?*

§ 18. In the firſt place, mankind having by that means more time to reflect on the wretchedneſs of their *lapſed* condition, and their own inſufficiency to ſatisfy the divine juſtice, to cleanſe themſelves from their contracted pollutions, and regain their *forfeited* freedom, they of courſe became more and more convinced of the neceſſity of a Redeemer, (ſome more than human Redeemer) to reſtore them to themſelves, to reconcile them to their offended God, and to reſcue them from the tyranny of the vile betrayer.

§ 19. If then the Redeemer had been ſent into the world ſoon after the fall of Adam, or within an age or two after the flood, and checked by that means Satan's controul in its infancy, the manifeſtation of divine power in ſuch a ſignal conqueſt, and of conſequence the glory ariſing from it, had been abundantly leſs conſiderable than they afterwards were, when—*in the laſt days the Son of God was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the Devil*—I ſay, in the *laſt days*, when the prince of darkneſs had ſo *widely* extended his dominions, and continued robbing the King of Heaven of almoſt all his ſubjects, in every province of his empire here below, except-

excepting that of *Paleſtine* (nor was that totally exempt from Satanic ſway)—at ſuch a juncture as this, when the apoſtacy of mankind became ſo *conſpicuous* and univerſal here, it was evidently moſt for the glory of God to aſſert his rightful ſovereignty, to pull down the uſurped empire of his rival, the prince of the apoſtate powers, and reſcue a captive world (in themſelves helpleſs and hopeleſs, and yet deſirous at the ſame time of a deliverance) from the tyranny and oppreſſion of thoſe their ſpiritual *enemies*, whom they had *before* ſo unguardedly careſſed, as *friends*.

§ 20. If, in the ſecond place, the Redeemer had come earlier into the world than he did, men might have been tempted to regard the Almighty, as leſs provoked by their prior apoſtacy and rebellion, or more placable, condeſcending, and eaſy to be entreated, than might well comport with either his dignity, majeſty, or honor.

§ 21. And if, added to the paſt comfortleſs ſtate of the *heathen* world, there is (what we are now to account for) a great part of the human race, to whom the arm of the Lord is not yet revealed, men—who ſtill ſit in darkneſs, on whom not a ſingle ray of the light of the Goſpel has as yet ſhined; and who, being *unregenerate*, are of courſe under the dominion of the powers of darkneſs—with what an advantage does the Goſpel-diſpenſation appear?—With what additional majeſty and luſtre does the ſun of righteouſneſs emerge out of ſuch an Egyptian darkneſs? And who is ſo inſenſible of the bleſſings reſulting from that *light*, as not to learn, from ſuch a contraſted view of things, to prize more highly, to acknowledge with greater gratitude, and to covet and embrace more ardently the great bleſſings of the Goſpel-diſpenſation?

§ 22. Are *they* borne down with the torrent of impetuous and unruly appetites, eſſential to *unregenerate* nature? Are they hurried into enormities and ſavage cruelties, at the bare mention of which civilized humanity is ſhocked, and can ſcarce conſider as the deeds of *man?* How muſt that conſideration work upon *our* gratitude, to whom are propoſed the Goſpel terms of ſalvation—by a ſincere and cordial acceptance of which we are renewed in the *ſpirit of our minds*—are turned from darkneſs to light, and from the power of *Satan* unto *God*—are furniſhed with the whole armour of God, and enabled to ſtand againſt the wiles of the Devil---to combat the outrageous appetites of degenerate nature, and regain our loſt intereſt in Heaven*?

APPLICATION III.

From a ſuppoſed pre-exiſtence and prior *lapſe* of human ſouls, we are enabled to form a proper judgment of the controverted doctrine of *election* and *reprobation*, and to account for the preſent non-*univerſality* of the *Chriſtian faith.*

§ 23. Thoſe paſſages in Scripture, on which is grounded the doctrine of election and reprobation——*Many are called, but few are choſen*, and——*as many as the Lord our God ſhall call*——when viewed through that medium, afford a pleaſing illuſtration of the

* If it ſhould be urged, that theſe reflections would hold equally good, upon a ſuppoſed *imputed* guilt from Adam, as from a pretended *pre-exiſtent* tranſgreſſion, I will allow that they would, when I can be convinced that there is no *difference*, whether it be on the one account or on the other, that the world *lies in wickedneſs* and under the *power of the Devil*; or that the *forbearing* to releaſe men from miſeries, in which they became involved by no crime of their own, can, upon any conſideration whatever, be made reconcilable with our uſual ideas of infinite goodneſs, mercy, and juſtice.

Scripture

Scripture-doctrine of election and reprobation, as explained in my Diſſertation on predeſtination, election, &c.

§ 24. For though the great work of redemption will, as we may reaſonably hope, become *univerſal* at laſt, yet it is evident from Scripture, that God means to have it *gradually* accompliſhed—— by a *partial* election and *temporary* rejection of men lying under the guilt of a prior apoſtacy. And as all the ſeed of Abraham were not the children of promiſe—*as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Eſau have I hated*—ſo neither were all the *ſons of Adam* meant to be partakers HERE of the benefits of the Goſpel-diſpenſation. "*As many as thou gaveſt me*," ſays our Saviour, "*I have kept.*" But though *many* were *called*, yet but *few* were *choſen*. And in this it is plain there was no *unrighteouſneſs* with God, if we conſider that all had ſo ſinned in a *prior* ſtate, as to have forfeited their Maker's favour, in a greater or leſs degree, in proportion to the meaſure of their reſpective demerits. And therefore Providence had wiſely ordered, that the moſt abandoned of the fallen race ſhould for a time ſit in darkneſs and the ſhadow of death, that others, more deſerving of the divine clemency, ſhould behold with a proportioned gratitude, that *day-ſpring* from on high which has viſited *us*. And *thus* a ſeeming *partiality* in Divine Providence *here* is perfect *equity*. *Thus* may God have *mercy on whom He will have mercy*, and whom he will he may *juſtly* harden. *Thus* hath the *potter* a *juſt* power over the *clay of the ſame lump*, to make one *veſſel unto honour*, and *another unto diſhonour*. For what if *God willing to ſhew his wrath*, and to make his *power be known, endured with much long-ſuffering, the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction*; that he might make known the *riches of his glory* on the *veſſels of mercy*, which he had *before prepared unto glory?* In other words, what if God, out of a *world lying in wickedneſs*, *children of wrath*, on account of a *prior* contempt of his power and authority,

and

and under vaſſalage to his rival the prince of devils, ſhould *elect*, for a reſtoration to his favour, upon the Goſpel terms, whom he ſhould find moſt *deſerving* of that *partiality*, (which is in reality no partiality at all, but conſiſtent equity) reſerving for ſome *future* trials of obedience, the more *notorious* offenders? And if there has been hitherto ſuch a *partial* diſplay of the light of the Goſpel, and from the want of it in the *ſavage parts* of the world, ſcenes of nought but the tranſactions of *demi-devils* in the likeneſs of *men*, who ſees not that God purpoſely ſet *thoſe* to view, as the *ruins* of original righteouſneſs, and as ſucceſſive memento's of the miſeries ariſing from their prior apoſtacy?

§ 25. In this ſatisfactory light, does the Scripture doctrine of election and reprobation (which reſpects the Goſpel diſpenſation *only* *) and the *preſent* want of an univerſality of the Chriſtian faith appear, when viewed through the medium of a lapſe of human ſouls in a ſtate of pre-exiſtence.

APPLICATION IV.

Through the medium of the ſame hypotheſis we are enabled to ſee into the propriety of the nature and circumſtances of the Jewiſh theocracy.

§ 26. The Almighty ſelected from the reſt of the world, took under his immediate protection, and ſhowered down perpetual bleſſings on—whom? Why on a people remarkable for their impiety, rebellion, and every ſpecies of ingratitude. And were theſe a people in whoſe favour the Almighty could with propriety intereſt him-

* I mean it relates *only* to the *calling ſome* to the knowledge and advantages of that Goſpel, and with-holding others from them.

ſelf

ſelf in ſo *peculiar* a manner—Wretches daily meriting his deteſtation and abhorrence? Yes. For their demerits *only* they were *ſo* ſelected from the reſt of the world, were *ſo* highly favoured, benefited, careſſed and honoured. For what more ſuitable method could the Almighty take to exhibit to *after* ages, a view of nature lapſed from original righteouſneſs? What more ſtriking picture could be given of man in his natural, unregenerate, *unchriſtianized* frame? And what a ſtrong proof ariſes from it of the *expediency* and *neceſſity* of the *renovating* aids of the *Chriſtian* diſpenſation.

§ 27. Every inſtance of divine favour was a tacit appeal to the *heart* of each Jew, and a trial of his piety and gratitude. And as *preſent* rewards uſually operate with more force than ſuch as are in reverſion, the former were the promiſed recompence for their obedience—and thoſe *only*. With theſe they were ſatisfied—they were ſolicitous for nothing more—future rewards were out of the queſtion—the *Moſaic Covenant* promiſed *none*, (as the learned author of the divine legation of Moſes with great truth affirms) nor did they *engage* for the obſervance of that *covenant*, on any *promiſe* of *rewards in a future ſtate*.

§ 28. Again, the *law*, as ſays the Apoſtle, was given by Moſes, but *grace* and *truth* came by Jeſus Chriſt. The *law* was given to the Jews to try what they would, or rather to ſhew, what, *perſonally* lapſed as they were from original righteouſneſs, they could *not* do. And that *grace*, from the want of which they were unable to act up to an obſervance even of laws to which were annexed *preſent* rewards, that *grace* to which, as *prior* delinquents, they had forfeited all kind of claim, came, with no injuſtice to them, by Jeſus Chriſt *only*.

§ 29. When

§ 29. When again we conſider that the *nations round about them* were devoting themſelves *onwards* to the worſhip and ſervice of the rival of the Almighty's authority, and renewing thoſe engagements with him on earth, which they had ſo cordially fulfilled before in Heaven, who does not ſee into the propriety of God's proceeding, in occaſionally holding *them* forth *here* as objects of his wrath, indignation, and *exterminating* vengeance, in his authorizing the *Iſraelites* to extirpate the *Canaanites* on account of their idolatry? A circumſtance for which the ſhort-ſighted ſceptic treats with ſuch indignant deriſion the *Bible Hiſtory* of that event. Seen through the medium of a ſuppoſed prior apoſtacy in the *ſufferers*, how reconcilable are the recorded inſtances of divine wrath with infinite rectitude? Not leſs ſo, ſurely, than were, among others, the *permitted* barbarities of the *Spaniards* in their conqueſt of the *Americans*, (who, "notwithſtanding that they were *idolaters* and *barbarians*, had been guilty of no offence towards the Spaniards*") and the numberleſs barbarities, maſſacres, and devaſtations, which have raged, more or leſs, in every country and age ſince, through the *diabolical* thirſt for *ſlaughtering* fame, or an inſatiable appetite for an increaſe of riches and dominion in *ambitious* monarchs and *chartered* traders. Eſpecially when no doubt can reaſonably be entertained, that *all* who are or have been treated as mere objects of *juſtice* only for a ſeaſon, will, in the fulneſs of time, become objects of *kindneſs*, *mercy* and *compaſſion*.

APPLICATION V.

The means for obtaining juſtification and ſalvation are aſcertained likewiſe by an application of the doctrine of a *lapſe* of human ſouls in a ſtate of pre-exiſtence.

* Robinſon Cruſoe, Vol. II.

§ 30. Is

§ 30. Is it not the language of Scripture, that, during our *unregeneracy here* we are in a ſtate of continued enmity and rebellion againſt God; ſtill a kind of liege ſubjects to the prince of the apoſtate powers? Is it not at the ſame time equally evident, that God, in his wrath, thinketh upon mercy; that he is in *Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes——that they may be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God*; that we may receive *the free gift of many offences unto juſtification——being juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus?*

§ 31. And what are the conditions on our part, required by the Goſpel diſpenſation, to ſecure to us the mighty bleſſing? Is there not, in reality, only *one*, and that an actual, cordial, unreſerved *faith in Chriſt* *? Moſt aſſuredly yes. Did not God ſo love the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever *believeth* in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life? John iii. 16. Are not the actions of our Saviour recorded——that we might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of God, and that *believing*, we might have life through his name? John xx. 31. And what ſays the Apoſtle to the Romans? If thou ſhalt confeſs, ſays he, with thy mouth, the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt *believe* in thine heart, that God hath raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved. Rom. x. 9. And again—*By the deeds of the law*, ſays he, *there ſhall be no fleſh juſtified in his ſight.*

But now the *righteouſneſs of God without the law* is manifeſted, *being witneſſed by the law and prophets*; even the righteouſneſs of

* I mean ſuch a belief in Jeſus Chriſt, as implies a firm reliance on him, as the *promiſed Meſſiah* and *Redeemer* of fallen man.

God, which is by faith of (in) Jeſus Chriſt unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference.

For all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God, being juſtified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus.

Whom God hath ſet forth (or as the marginal reading rightly words it, *fore-ordained*) to be a propitiation through *faith in his blood*, to declare his righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God.

To declare, I ſay, his righteouſneſs, that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus.

Now can any thing be more plainly the ſenſe of the preceding paſſages, than that we are *juſtified* or cleared from the guilt of original ſin, reſtored to the forfeited favour and affection of God, and reſcued from the power and dominion of ſin and Satan, by a true faith in Chriſt *only*? Is there a ſingle word throughout, about *works*? Not a ſyllable. And how inefficacious *they* are and muſt be, for the effecting that *juſtification* to which the Apoſtle alludes, which is the ſubject of the Goſpel œconomy, and the *very price of our redemption*, we ſhall ſee through the medium of a prior *lapſe* of human ſouls with a clearneſs that cannot but ſtrike conviction upon the moſt partial and unwilling mind.

§ 32. The new or mediatorial œconomy, eſtabliſhed by the author of our ſalvation, is frequently ſtiled in Scripture the kingdom *of God*, and that partly, if not principally, in contradiſtinction to the kindom of *Satan*. This is plainly intimated by our Saviour's anſwer to his enemies who traduced him as an impoſtor, and as one

one who was in confederacy with *Beelzebub*, the prince of devils. *If Satan*, ſays he, *caſt out Satan, he is divided againſt himſelf; how then ſhall his kingdom ſtand?*

But if I caſt out devils by the ſpirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Matt. xii. 26, 28.

In this paſſage Chriſt and Satan are repreſented as rival princes, poſſeſſed of kingdoms inconſiſtent with, and deſtructive of each other.

To the ſame purpoſe is that parable in St. *Luke*, of a ſtrong man in his palace overcome by a ſtronger than he. Luke xi. 21, 22. And that other, in which the kingdom of Heaven is likened to a man that ſowed good ſeed in the field, but while he ſlept his enemy came, and ſowed tares among the wheat. Matt. xiii. 24, &c. Agreeably to all this St. Paul obſerves to the Corinthians, that there is no concord betwixt *Chriſt* and *Belial*.

§ 33. If to theſe paſſages we ſhould add St. *John*'s declaration, that for this purpoſe the ſon of God was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the works of the devil, and, that St. *Paul* ſuppoſes *all* men in general (in their *natural unregenerate* ſtate I mean) to walk according to the *prince of the power of the air*—Vid. my critique on Epheſians, ch. ii. ver. 2, 3.—It will appear that he who is our *Redeemer* comes with the delegated authority *of a king*, to aſſert his Father's right to an uncontrouled, unoppoſed ſovereignty over the univerſe; to annihilate, by degrees, Satan's uſurped empire over this inferior world, and to reſcue mankind from his oppreſſion, by turning them from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God—and that by offering them peace with their offended God, and pardon for that paſt *aſſociation* with the prince of dark-

neſs, which we have ſuppoſed, on the ſtipulated conditions of a ſincere, unſhaken *fidelity* to Him, the appointed captain of our ſalvation.

§ 34. Till therefore we have diſavowed our *attachment* to the prince of darkneſs, and ſworn allegiance to our *deliverer*, there hangs over our heads, for our prior diſloyalty, the rod of vengeance; ſtill we are objects of the divine wrath; and be our *moral* accompliſhments ever ſo many and great, we are, and muſt be upon the liſt of rebels ſtill. Our *attainder* muſt be taken off, e're we can be made even *candidates* for an entrance into Chriſt's kingdom. And in that conſiſts our *juſtification*; which replaceth us before the eye of Deity, in the ſame favourable and auſpicious point of view wherein we ſtood, when poſſeſſed of that original righteouſneſs and moral rectitude, by a departure from which we became rebels to the King of Heaven, and, in its conſequence, were baniſhed his divine preſence. Herein conſiſts that righteouſneſs of God, which is—by what? By *good works?* Is it not by *faith of Jeſus Chriſt unto all, and upon all them that believe?* And our *juſtification*—is it in the leaſt degree effected by the merit of *good works?* Is it not accompliſhed wholly and ſolely through *the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus*, and through faith in his blood? Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that juſtifieth *; who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea rather, that is riſen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us.

§ 35. *Juſtification*, then, conſidered in this view, as a releaſe, I mean, from the guilt of a *prior perſonal* lapſe from original righ-

* That is, who through Chriſt, accepts us as juſt, by our faith and reliance on his mediation, interceſſion, &c.

teouſ-

teouſneſs, inſtead of a *derived* guilt and defilement from Adam, exalts—how greatly! the dignity and merit aſcribed in Scripture to a *true faith in Chriſt*, at the ſame time that it enables us the more clearly to adjudge to *faith* and *good works* the regards due to their reſpective efficacy in accompliſhing man's *final* ſalvation.

§ 36. The two apoſtles differed on that point only in appearance; and whilſt the one with great truth aſſerted, that the works of the law ceaſed to have any ſhare in the *juſtification* of the elect *chriſtianized* Jew, ſo circumſtanced, and ſo conſidered; the other with equal propriety declared, that faith *alone* could not render *worthy of the vocation wherewith he was called*, the *converted* Gentile. Men muſt become Chriſtians to be *juſtified*, i. e. cleared from the imputation of their original ſins and treſpaſſes, and to be *conſiſtent* Chriſtians, they muſt become *good men*. How apparently then is *faith* in Chriſt *alone* neceſſary for the firſt, and how evidently eſſential are *good works* for the latter? And how conſiſtent altogether with each other are the two apoſtles *? And if there are ſome who ſay that all our *moral* works, independent of *Chriſtian renovation*, are unavailable to *juſtification*, or to clear us from *original* ſin, how apparently do they ſpeak a Scripture doctrine? What they err in, is, their aſcribing that original guilt, by which at our birth we became objects of the divine wrath and indignation, to the tranſgreſſion of another perſon—to fallen Adam; which can with no degree of propriety, nor with any warrantable conceptions of the divine attributes, or even without blaſphemy, be aſcribed to aught elſe but to our own *perſonal* treſpaſſes in a *prior* ſtate.

The trivial reaſon for the horrid hypotheſis, viz. that God had provided or pre-ordained a Redeemer, in favour of thoſe who

* To clear up this point, the reader is deſired to peruſe with attention my obſervations on the ſubject inſerted in the Addenda.

ſhould

ſhould be involved in the ruinous effects of Adam's fall, ſo far from being a rational appeal to our underſtandings, is, on the contrary, a barefaced inſult upon common ſenſe. Juſt as if a king ſhould condemn a man to death for *another* perſon's crime, in order that he might, in compliment to another's interceſſion, ſhew his *mercy* afterwards in giving the imaginary or *imputed* offender life.

APPLICATION VI.

From the doctrine of a pre-exiſtence, &c. of human ſouls, there ariſes an additional argument in proof of that life and immortality ſo happily brought to light by the Goſpel.

§ 37. The idea of the ſoul's being immortal from time paſt, ſtrengthens our hopes of its being ſo for time to come—We may from thence with no ſmall degree of probability infer, that there are in its nature and eſſence, the ſeeds of immortality. From a *view* however of the ſoul in a contrary light, as not having experienced thought, and of courſe a vital exiſtence, previous to its *entrance* into this ſtate, a *royal* author concludes, that ſuch will be its fate at its *departure* from it.

De l'avenir, cher Keith, jougeons par le paſsé;
Comment avant que je fuſſe, il n'avoit point penſé,
De meme apres ma Mort, quand toutes mes parties,
Par la coruption, ſeront anneanties,
Par un meme deſtin il ne penſera plus;
Non—rien n' eſt plus certain ſoyons-en convaincus,
Des que nous finiſſons, notre ame eſt eclipſée.

Elle

Elle eſt en tout ſemblable à la flamme élancée,
Qui part du Bois ardent dont elle ſe nourrit,
Et des qu'il tombe en cendre elle baiſſe et perit *.

Of which the following contains the ſenſe, though not, I fear, the ſpirit.

From what is paſt, dear Keith, learn what's to come;
Thought *I had* none, *till iſſuing from the womb.*
By the ſame law of fate, when death's cold dart
Shall chill the vital powers, and every part
Of this precarious fabric ſhall be brought
To diſſolution, then adieu to thought—
Yes, reſt aſſured, when here *we ceaſe to live---*
The ſoul makes no pretenſion to ſurvive—
Alike relinquiſhing its mortal frame,
As quits th' enkindled BRAND *the lambent flame;*
Which gives, the ember falling to decay,
A faint and fainter light, then---dies away.

But the royal author himſelf muſt ſurely wiſh to reverſe his own propoſition, for the ſake of this reverſe and more comfortable *concluſion*, which by a parity of reaſon iſſues from it.

From what is paſt we learn what is to be,
From pre-exiſtence—immortality.
As to a prior *life we died, 'tis plain,*
When next we die, 'twill be to live *again.*

§ 38. The *auguſt* writer of *Oeuvres du Philoſophe*, &c. has indeed exerted his ſpeculative and poetic talents with a ſhare of ſucceſs, equal

* Oeuvres du Philoſophe du ſans ſouci, tom. ii. p. 143.

to

to what might be expected from his extraordinary abilities. The arguments thrown out as above and elsewhere, in support of *Lucretian* and other sceptic principles, I consider rather as occasional efforts of genius and imagination, than specimens of his *real* sentiments. For can the royal hero, after having experienced such an almost unparalleled series of hair-breadth escapes from surrounding destruction, and leadings to victory and glory equally amazing, imagine that for the *destruction* of fellow-*souls* only *, an hidden SOMEWHAT so whatchfully and so effectually interposed in his favour? Or is it possible that, contenting himself with the hopes of a *shadowy* immortality in the annals of *fame*, he should endeavour to reason himself out of all desire of ascending with increasing glory to a *real* immortality? The P——n M——h possesses a soul too enlarged, I am persuaded, to contract his views within the HORIZON of this MOLE-HILL, in the infinity of worlds, and unconcernedly to assign to CORRUPTION that active and exalted principle to which he owes all his more than ordinary dignity, as a man, a hero, and a king. Can he, in short, help reasoning with himself thus?

The mind that knows etherial worlds to trace,
Sees by what laws athwart the boundless space
Of Heaven's domain huge comets wond'rous roll,
Their fires dilate; how various suns controul
Revolving planets, stars unmov'd convey
To darksome orbs the bright enliv'ning ray——
Say, shall that pure pervading spirit eye
All nature thro' th' immeasurable sky,
Nor once where first *she learnt to live and love,*
Not once revisit *those bless'd realms above!*

* *Ame* baisse et *perit*. See above.

Absurd!

Abſurd! Mark how the ſubtle mental flame
Emits pow'rs active, *matter dares not claim!*
Self-conſcious, ſelf-empower'd to think, to chuſe,
Rejoice, grieve, hope, fear, love, hate, will, refuſe.
Great in herſelf, and ſcorning matter's aid,
She views, compares, digeſts; in darkneſs laid,
The truth unform'd, and which in embryo ſleeps,
She quickens, ſhapes, and in juſt order keeps;
'Twixt that *and* error *fixes the barrier,*
" For ever ſep'rate, and for ever near."

Of things their cauſes next diſtinct eſpies;
Hence arts on arts in beauteous order riſe;
Till more and more progreſſive in its ſearch,
It kens, contemplates, touches Heaven's high arch;
Connects the links, which diff'rent worlds unite,
From higheſt Angels to the reptile mite;
Then drops into herſelf, and plenteous there,
Views in idea all things as they are;
Broods o'er the deep of thought—knows all but this——
*Her awful wondrous ſelf—whence—*what *ſhe is,*
And lodge ſuch virtues in meer ſenſeleſs clay?
Knows the MACHINE *by whom it's taught to play?*
By whom firſt bid to move?——Say, Atheiſts, ſay.

Ceaſe then to wonder ſouls *hereafter live,*
This frail, this mould'ring tenement ſurvive;
Much rather ſay the ſafer doubt will lie,
Whether 'tis poſſible the ſoul can *die——*
One individual (no parts conjoin'd)
A pure, etherial, ſelf-directing mind,

Which nought external can affect, annoy,
Corrupt, impair, diſturb, debaſe, deſtroy.
Itſelf its mover ſole, ſay, by what art
Shall it e'er ſeparate?—from itſelf depart!

This ſcene of line contemplate, if you can,
With joy, and vindicate the ways of God to man,
If here it ſhuts—No—See the coming day,
When clouds and darkneſſes will fly away——
Vain is that hope!—Then e'en diſclaim thy God,
Say all are fools who fear'd his threat'ning rod.
Ne'er from the ways of Heaven a God infer——
A God who ſo egregiouſly can err.

Ah no! be calm—expect (*tho'* how *or* when
It matters not) *when all ſhall live again;*
When Heav'n to truth ſhall ſhew its fond regard,
And give to good and bad the due reward.*

APPLICATION VII.

The Goſpel diſpenſation in general, and the *mediatorial œconomy* in particular, when conſidered as reſulting from a *prior lapſe* of human, inſtead of a ſuppoſed derived guilt from Adam, conſidered and applied.

§ 39. How worthy of all acceptation muſt appear the plan of man's redemption, on the *firſt* hypotheſis! What can we con-

* The above is a *tranſlation* of a part of Mr. *Brown's Poem de Animi Immortalitate* —I wiſh it equalled the elegant original.

ceive

ceive more worthy a God of infinite wiſdom, goodneſs, and mercy, than by means ſuitable to his dignity and glory, to call back to his love, his favour, his protection, creatures beguiled into diſloyalty and diſobedience by an artful, ambitious, enterpriſing rival of his power and authority! And how engaging and endearing muſt be that love which ſo benevolently interpoſed to effectuate the compaſſionate deſign! "How worthy "the lamb that was ſlain to receive power and riches, and wiſdom, "and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing," for ſo noble ſo exalted a purpoſe as this——for *thus* coming into the world to ſave ſinners! "to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind "up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and "opening of the priſon to them that are bound," Iſa. lxi. 1. to be made an "offering for ſin," for that original, pre-exiſtent ſin, by which we forfeited the favour of God, "to give his life a "ranſom for all; to be a propitiation for our ſins, and to make "*reconciliation* with *God* for them," by ſharing in the multiplied miſeries and calamities of human nature, without having been a partaker of that original guilt from which they enſued. "He "was cut off, but not for himſelf, Dan. ix. 26. he was wounded "for our tranſgreſſions, and bruiſed for our impieties," Iſa. liii. 5.—was made a ſin and a curſe for us, 2 Cor. v. 21. Galat. iii. 13.——died for the ungodly, "ſuffered for the unjuſt," 1 Pet. iii. 18.—"taſted death for every man," Heb. ii. 9.——"that through "death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that "is, the Devil*, and deliver them, who through fear of death "were all their life-time in bondage," Heb. ii.——that he might

* The prince of the fallen angels,——the God of this world; He to whom we are, by nature, (in conſequence of our prior aſſociation with him) *his* children, ſervants, and ſubjects.

" finiſh tranſgreſſion and make an end of ſin*," that he might " make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlaſting righ- " teouſneſs." Dan. ix. 24. Hence it is that he became a " full, " perfect, and ſufficient ſacrifice, oblation, and ſatisfaction, for " the ſins of the whole world." Hence it is, that the " chaſtiſe- " ment of our peace was upon him, and with his ſtripes we were " healed," Iſa. liii. 5.——that we are reconciled to the Father in his croſs, " and in the body of his fleſh through death," Col. i. 21, 22.——" are ſanctified by the offering of his body once for " all," Heb. x. 10.——are redeemed by his blood, as of a lamb without blemiſh, and " without ſpot." 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.——Hence, laſtly, it is, that Chriſt " is the mediator of the New Teſtament," and " that by means of death for the redemption of the tranſgreſ- " ſions," (the original tranſgreſſions under, and unattoned for, or unexpiated by the firſt Teſtament) " they which are called might " receive the promiſe of eternal inheritance, Heb. ix. 15.——" the " promiſe being made to all, that are afar off, even as many as the " Lord our God ſhall call." Acts. ii. 39.

§ 40. And now is it poſſible for *deiſts* to behold, and not with raptures embrace Chriſtianity, when placed in ſo conſiſtent, ſo amiable a light? Will they now think ſcorn of our faith, and treat it ſtill with their wonted contempt and deriſive blaſphemies? Who will not now, on the contrary, glory in having been received into the *congregation of Chriſt's flock?* Who will now *be aſhamed to confeſs the faith of Chriſt crucified, manfully to fight under his banner, againſt ſin, the world and the Devil, and to continue Chriſt's faithful ſoldier and ſervant unto his life's end?* I flatter myſelf that

* *To make an end of ſin*,—that is, to make an end of the *guilt* and *puniſhment* of ſin, of *original* ſin, moſt undoubtedly; for " ſin ſtill reigns in our mortal bodies," and " there is none yet that doth good, no, not one."

but

but few, if any, of that ſtamp will be found, among thoſe I mean, who would be deemed men of reaſon, reflection, and ſelf-regard.

§ 41. The calm, the ſedate, the reflecting Sceptic, will now find charms in religion, of which he had no idea before; will, with an unuſual ſerioufneſs, bethink himſelf of his ſtate and condition here; will be equally anxious to enquire, whence could ariſe, and by what means may be removed, thoſe intellectual depravities and impurities, which debaſe him even in his own eyes, and from which reaſon, as well as Scripture, agree it is neceſſary for him to be refined and cleanſed, e're it is poſſible for him to ſee God.

§ 42. Am I then a ſtranger, ſays he, and pilgrim upon earth, baniſhed from the preſence of my Maker, and from Heaven, my native home? Were my tranſgreſſions in a prior ſtate the horrid cauſe of this dreadful calamity? Was it by means of them, that I now wear thoſe foul ſtains in my nature, by which my will and affections are corrupted, my underſtanding darkened and perplexed, and my whole mind debaſed and degenerated from moral rectitude? For my pre-exiſtent apoſtacy from God is it, that I came into the world a creature *born in ſin*, by *nature a child of wrath?* Was it for rebellion againſt Him, that I am ſent hither under the power and dominion of *Satan*, who ſeduced, as I am aſſured from Scripture, a whole order of beings into ſin? Is it for this, that I bear about me this body of ſin, which is enmity againſt God, which is not ſubject to the law of God; neither indeed can be; which gives maintenance to ſuch an army of fleſhly luſts, that war againſt my ſoul? And to reſtore me to the favour and affection of my offended God, to expiate the guilt of my paſt tranſgreſſions by his own imputed *righteouſneſs*, to renew in me that degree of it, wherein I was firſt created, to reſcue me from the dominion of my firſt betrayer,

trayer, and bring me again into the glorious liberty of the ſons of God? Is it for this cauſe that the Son of God was manifeſted? Are theſe thoſe works of the Devil, which he came to deſtroy? Welcome then, my Saviour, my Redeemer! O thrice welcome to an entire ſurrender of my ſoul to thy word, thy will, and thy authority, thou captain of my ſalvation! O conduct me, thou highly favoured of Heaven, to the mercy-ſeat of my offended Sovereign! O give me there to proſtrate myſelf before his injured Majeſty! Veil me from the countenance of him that is againſt them that do evil; ſhield me from his uplifted vengeance; under the ſhadow of thy wings hide me from his wrath—throw me, clad with righteouſneſs, into the arms of infinite mercy—into thy arms, oh my God?—And oh give me, O God, the comfort of thine help again, and eſtabliſh me with thy free ſpirit! So ſhall ſinners be converted unto thee, and men ſhall ſing of thy righteouſneſs. Caſt me not away from thy preſence, and let not thy jealouſy burn like fire for ever. And do thou, oh bleſſed Spirit, with thine all-healing, all-purifying influences on thy wing, deſcend upon my ſoul, take an unrivalled poſſeſſion of my heart, make it a fit temple for thy abode, refine it from all its impurities; make it an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob—and I will fall low on my knees before his footſtool.

§ 43. Such muſt undoubtedly be the overflowings of an heart touched with a true ſenſe of religion, of the *true cauſe*, I mean, of the wretchedneſs of man's abode here, and the deliverance propoſed to him by the mediatorial œconomy.

To thoſe who have *ſo learned Chriſt*, the Goſpel comes in *the demonſtration of the ſpirit, and of power*—not in the words *which man's wiſdom teacheth*, but which *the holy* Ghoſt teacheth. May, therefore, all thoſe who as yet know *but in part*, and *ſee darkly as through*

through a glaſs the ſoul-reviving comforts of Chriſtianity, have the *eyes of their underſtanding enlightened* by the gracious influence of the holy ſpirit—may that comfortleſs miſt which at preſent overſpreads the face of truth, which eclipſes the enrapturing brightneſs, and clouds, with an *horrid* gloom, the majeſty of the ſun of righteouſneſs and ſalvation, be at length ſo effectually removed, that men may ſee clearly the glory that is revealed by the Goſpel—may taſte and ſee how gracious the Lord is—that thy mercy, O Lord, *reacheth unto the heavens*, and *thy glory unto the clouds*.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

An extract from that part of "An account of ORIGEN, *and his opinion," (vid. p. 23.) which relates to pre-existence.*

ARGUMENT I.

THE nature of the ſoul is ſuch as makes her capable of exiſting eternally *backward* as well as *forward*. For her ſpiritual eſſence, as ſuch, makes it impoſſible that ſhe ſhould, either through age or violence, be diſſolved part from part, as it happens in bodies, where there is no *vinculum* paſſing through the very ſubſtance of them to tie and retain one part to another; and therefore, either through the ſtiller inſinuation of other bodies near them, they inſenſibly melt away and decay, or by the ruder daſhes of ſuch as ſtrike againſt them are broken all to pieces: whereas the ſoul, as a *Spirit*, by the advantage of that *formal* power and property of hers whereby ſhe is diſtinguiſhed from matter, cannot only *penetrate* herſelf and other ſubſtances to the preſerving her own *continuity*; but alſo by her *gradual derivation* of part from part, is in her whole ſubſtance ultimately connected to her *indiviſible head* and *centre*, as *Plotinus* ſpeaks. Which *centre* being in its very *ſubſtance* intellectual, does plainly ſhew who is the father of it, viz. the *eſſential*

mind and *wiſdom* of God, whoſe univocal productions (as I may ſo ſpeak) are according to their meaſure and capacity what their parent is in the moſt perfect and moſt infinite degree conceivable, *life itſelf*, or *eternal life*; and therefore thoſe other parts of the ſubſtance of the ſoul, which neceſſarily proceed and flow from this, can no more be cut off from it than *indiviſible* can be divided, nor no more periſh than *life itſelf* can die *.

We have then here an *eſſence* capable of eternal exiſtence; and ſince the powers and operations of life are not ſuch things as can at pleaſure be put on and off like looſe-hanging *adjuncts*, but are intrinſically made up into the eſſential contexture of the ſubſtance they are in; ſo vital and active a ſubſtance as the ſoul is, is as capable of acting according to her nature, and conſequently of feeling and enjoying the pleaſure of her life and actions from eternal ages, as ſhe is of bare exiſtence throughout that long period of duration. So that nothing now is wanting to her actual exiſtence but his good pleaſure, from whom ſhe and all things elſe proceed. I appeal therefore to your own candid breaſt, and that noble benignity of mind which is in you, what reaſon or cauſe can you think of, worthy of God, which will manifeſtly aſſure us that the ſoul did not actually exiſt of old? If you pitch upon the *Platonic* way, and aſſign the production of all things to that exuberant *fulneſs of life* in the Deity, which through the bleſſed neceſſity and conſtraint of his moſt communicative nature emptied itſelf into all *poſſibilities* of *being*, as into ſo many capable receptacles, you muſt then pronounce her exiſtence in a ſenſe neceſſary, and after a ſort co-eternal with God.

* This argument is copiouſly and clearly illuſtrated in the writings of Dr. Henry More, and Mr. Glanville.

But

But if ſuch expreſſions ſeem too bold, and the heats of an *enthuſiaſtic fancy* take that more probable hypotheſis which is built upon the more conceivable attributes of God, his infinite *goodneſs* and benignity armed with equal *power*, and directed by no leſs *wiſdom*, beſides which nothing can be thought on to fit one for action; and then aſk yourſelf, whether if the ſubject in queſtion be capable of exiſting and enjoying ſome part of that infinite *goodneſs*, it be not evident from thoſe attributes that it will be made to exiſt; that which is infinitely good as certainly doing by a *logical neceſſity* every thing that is good, (no other attribute gainſaying) as infinite fire will neceſſarily burn whatever is combuſtible if put to it. Wherefore, unleſs God act by ſuch arbitrary humours as we mortal men are aſhamed of as weakneſſes and imperfections in ourſelves, there is no doubt to be made but that this concluſion is true, That the ſouls of men did exiſt and act *before* this preſent world was fitted for their habitation, at leaſt before they were born upon earth.

I have heard ſome men ſeriouſly profeſs, that there was a light and power in this argument far more vigorous and convincing to their minds, than in the plaineſt demonſtration in *Euclid's Elements*. But yet they wondered not that others were not moved by it, becauſe it required a *peculiar diſpoſition of ſpirit* to feel the *force* of it. For there are *moral* axioms *noematically* true as well as *geometrical*: and as a man, to whom the *common notions* of *geometry* appear not certain, muſt neceſſarily be inſenſible of the evidence of any *propoſition* in that ſcience; ſo will it happen to him whoſe ſoul is ſo much out of her *natural order*, as to have loſt, or dulled, or ſilenced by ſome means or other, her *diſcriminative ſenſe* of what is good, worthy, congruous and decorous; all argumentations proceeding upon thoſe κοιναι εννοιαι, thoſe *congenite* notices of a *diviner* ſenſe, which to others are *demonſtrations*, will affect him no more than an *ape* is taken with the *air* of *moral* beauty.

ARGUMENT II.

The actions of Providence will not otherwiſe correſpond to thoſe holy attributes in the Deity, *righteouſneſs* and *benignity*, according to which he governs and orders the affairs of all the world. This argument Origen makes uſe of in his book againſt *Celſus*, and in his Περι αρχων, in reſpect to the *place* and *time*, wherein we are born, and of the *temper* and *diſpoſition* of the *body* wherewith we are born. As to the firſt of theſe, there is no man doubts but that education, inſtitution, and company, are of wonderful moment to the making us good or bad. For it is manifeſt enough, that few are born into this world in any higher condition than a *poſſibility* (as I may ſo ſpeak) or *capability* of being made good and virtuous; which capability is perfected and actuated by good inſtruction and wholeſome precepts aſſiduouſly inculcated to us, and by exhibiting and commending to us daily examples of virtue and honeſty; ſo that when or where either is wanting, or of little credit and eſteem, or the contrary more in uſe and practice, there ſeems little leſs than a neceſſity of our running into all wickedneſs and vice. And if we call to mind the ſad accounts we have met withal in hiſtory, of times and places almoſt all the world over, over-run with all manner of barbarity and luſt, adopted even into their laws, and practiſed in their moſt ſolemn religions, how can we but think that the ſoul then and there born and living is inevitably condemned to all iniquity and impiety? What father will care for inſtructing his children in ſuch things as are of no uſe and ſmall regard in the place he lives in; eſpecially when they will certainly unlearn what he teaches them, by the ſtronger and more pleaſing impreſſions of publick practice? And indeed what father will be fit to teach them ſuch things, who himſelf hath all his life long, in all probability, done the contrary, being carried away in his younger years, as his chil-

children are now, by the popular ſtream of his country's vices? Certainly there is very little likelihood he ſhould prove a benign, loving, compaſſionate, or a juſt and upright man, who by the laws of the city where he was born is eſpecially trained up in his earlieſt years to the ferity and rage of war, and the ſleights of theft and cozenage.

It would be very eaſy for me to be copious in this argument: the hiſtories of all countries of old, all the apologies and diſputations of the primitive *fathers* againſt the *Gentiles*, the later deſcriptions of the religions and manners of ſeveral barbarous and idolatrous parts of the world not long ſince diſcovered or viſited, would afford me too plentiful matter to fill up a very ſad catalogue of all manner of iniquity, which hath and doth ſtill reign amongſt them with little or no controul. For God therefore to ſend out of his pure and holy hands an immaculate ſoul, capable of living elſewhere, and fit for all virtue and heavenly wiſdom, leſt the luſt of two brutiſh perſons poſſibly ſhould come to nothing, and condemn it to an habitation in ſuch parts of the earth where reigns nothing but groſs ignorance and vice, by which ſhe cannot fail, without a miracle, to be overborne (having ſuch a principle in her vivid and vigorous, to which thoſe brutiſh depravities are natural and hugely pleaſing, and that better principle of life which ſhould defend her from them being ſcarce in a poſſibility of being awakened into any conſiderable degree of power and energy in ſuch an education, and ſuch converſe, and amongſt ſuch examples as are above deſcribed) what is this, ſays the *father*, but to betray his own offspring (for he is the father of ſpirits) unto unavoidable miſery, and to put off the chief excellencies of his moſt bleſſed nature, *goodneſs* and *righteouſneſs*, and to govern the world with leſs juſtice than an ordinary upright man would do?

You

You may, if you pleaſe, taking occaſion from what hath been ſaid, carry this *firſt* part of his argument from Providence farther, and enquire how it came to paſs that ſo many whole nations, both of old and at this preſent day, were ſo over-run with all kind of barbarity, ferity, and beſtial luſt, ſo utterly eſtranged from the knowledge of God and the love of virtue, ſo abuſed and tyrannized over by the accurſed rebels of the *Aiery Principality*, the kingdom of darkneſs; laſtly, ſo quite eſtranged from themſelves and human nature, that they ſeem to have left themſelves nothing whereby they might be diſtinguiſhed from downright brutes, ſave ſpeech, and a ſomething larger and more methodical wit and craft to compaſs the ſatisfaction of their degenerate appetites. Truly, *Sir*, if you would form the *idea* of human perfection in no greater glory, or ſet the attainments of a reaſonable ſoul at no higher pitch than the certain knowledge of ſome of your own virtuous friends will warrant you to do, in whom (as you have oft with joy and wonder related to me) appears ſo pure and angelical an underſtanding, ſo firm and radicated a life of all holineſs and ſanctity, love and hearty benignity to all the world, of juſtice and purity, and whatever is truly divine; and if you then conſider the vaſt diſſimilitude between this *idea* and the ſpirit of ſo many whole nations in the world, I make no doubt but you will ſay, that the life of man upon earth is too ſhort, ſo far to abuſe the capacity of what he might come to, as to put him in ſo low a degree of degeneracy as thoſe forlorn people contentedly live in. But not only the degree of their apoſtacy from a divine and intellectual life, and of their immerſion in the brutiſh and ſenſual, is ſo wonderful, but their *continuance* alſo in that wretched eſtate for ſo many ages together, without any remarkable appearance of Providence for their deliverance, nay rather with her perfect leaving them to the inſolence, ſubtlety, and conduct of the Devil, is a *phænomenon* inexplicable without the *Origenian hypotheſis*. For ſince whole nations and their continuance are

but

but the *aggregate* of ſingle ſouls born into the world in ſucceſſive generations, and ſince every particular ſoul comes into ſuch or ſuch parts of the earth with ſo vaſt diſadvantages, as is above declared; if beſide this the crafty and malicious ſerpent hath ſuch free ſcope to tamper with them, who at the beſt are very deceivable; it can ſeem to you little leſs than *neceſſary* that they ſhould be wrought into that enormous lapſe from God, which hiſtory, and too ſad experience, witneſs they are and have been.

Now ſince the two great and moſt proper objects of the gracious and beneficent *providence* of God are the *virtuous* and *faultleſly calamitous*, (of which latter order thoſe miſerable nations would in great meaſure be, if ſouls did not *pre-exiſt*) who can doubt but that *Providence* would very early have appeared for their reſcue, or rather, taken ſuch care that they ſhould not ſo much have needed any extraordinary aſſiſtance from her? But ſince we ſee *ſhe* hath done neither, and yet are ſure that all her ways are *gracious* and *equal*, it will be very hard for us to keep ourſelves from concluding, that all thoſe wretched ſouls had of old, by their long *revolt* from God and the laws of his righteous kingdom, highly deſerved this ſcourge from him, to be ſo put out of his care, as it were, and given up to the barbarous domination of the *Devil*, the *head* and prince of the unrighteous and rebellious empire of darkneſs; and whom they by choice and affection fell off to in other regions of the world, that him and his tyranny they ſhould here upon earth ſtill ſuffer, whether with or againſt their wills. And ſince there is poſſibility and hope, that the preſent ſad part of the *drama* may end, and a more chearful *cataſtrophe* cloſe up all, the *benignity* of Providence may in due time be as illuſtrious, as her *juſtice* hath been conſpicuous.

I know there are many men who, part out of piety and humility, part from a parrot-like talking ſuch words as their books and educa-

cation

tion have taught them, can, with very great eaſe and ſatisfaction of mind, reſolve all into the *pleaſure* and *Sovereignty* of God, who being the Creator and Lord of all men, may (they ſay) diſpoſe of them how and where he pleaſes. But it would be very well if they were as zealous patrons of the more excellent *attributes* of God, as they are peremptory aſſertors of his *abſolute Will* and *Power*. For then they would both render his exiſtence and government in the world ſo deſirable to all men, that none but the extremely-guilty would wiſh either his *not-being* or his *non-concerning* himſelf in the affairs of men; and alſo cut off many ſcandalous occaſions of *Atheiſm* and *Epicuriſm*, and ſpoil the *profeſſed* of thoſe execrable myſteries of thoſe over-plauſible pretences they now have, and carefully manage againſt the truth. For tell me if the frame of the bodies, or the paſſions and affections of men or beaſts, in whole regions of the earth, or of many in every region, were ſuch as did plainly ſerve for nothing but to incommodate or cruciate them, or make them an inevitable prey to others; could you with any reaſonable confidence affirm, that the goodneſs and providence of a *wiſe mind* did preſide over their generations? or think you you could reaſonably ſatisfy the exceptions of an *Atheiſt* or an *Epicurean* taken from ſuch manifeſt *Phænomena*, by ſaying God *might* make them as he pleaſed which were his own voluntary handywork? I am glad, for my own particular, all things are ſo made, that there is no occaſion given for any ſuch exception; for, believe me, if there was, I know not how I ſhould behave myſelf in ſo croſs a rencounter. And may not theſe men, with the ſame plauſibility of reaſon, maintain the ſame concluſion from the odd frame of things in the *moral* world, were it ſuch as the denyers of *pre-exiſtence* muſt needs make it? I think they might do it with far juſter reaſon; foraſmuch as a man is a far nobler creature, and the intereſt of his mind and immortal Spirit much greater and more laſting, and therefore a more proper object of the care and providence of God, if any providence there be. Or are they ſo little peremptory

ry in their aſſaults as to be beaten off by ſuch painted fire, ſuch hurtleſs *lambent* flames as are caſt againſt them by thoſe who oppoſe to their arguments nothing but the *will* and *ſovereignty* of God? For they profeſs themſelves well aſſured that if God be at all, he is infinitely *good* and *wiſe*, as well as powerful and uncontroulable; and therefore, by the neceſſary conſequences of reaſon, wherever he is pretended by any to intermeddle, either as to the *making* or *diſpoſing* of any thing, they expect to find the impreſſes and indications of thoſe attributes: but if, inſtead thereof, they find all things quite contrary, it is not in their power to think that God hath had any thing to do there. But whatever ruin their argumentations from ſuch ſubſtantial grounds may threaten to the ill-built fabrick of ordinary *Theology*, the *houſe of Wiſdom* and Truth, which hath made *pre-exiſtence* one of her *pillars*, ſtands as firm as a mountainous *pyramid*; and by that *hypotheſis* the great *Phænomenon* of Providence we have been ſpeaking of is clear and righteous. Neither hath the *Atheiſt* or *Epicurean* any thing conſiderable to ſay againſt the truth of it, either as it is a ſingle propoſition by itſelf, or as an *hypotheſis* to ſolve the *Phænomena* of Providence. Which ſtreights of theirs they plainly enough confeſs by their either only gravely ſmiling at it as an extravagance, or, with a more ſolemn brow, chaſtiſing it as a dangerous *paradox*. And truly a dangerous one it is to their pretended and boaſted *wiſdom*: but to the genuine plants of heavenly truth and divine knowledge it is as agreeable and ſalutary as ſhowers and ſun-beams are to the growing ſpring.

The *ſecond* part of the *Father's* argument from Providence is much the ſame as the firſt, *mutatis mutandis*. For the experience of moſt men can bear witneſs, that there are not ſtronger allurements from *without*, to all manner of viciouſneſs, than we find incitations to the ſame from our own *intrinſick* conſtitution: which (according to the common *hypotheſis*) is not properly our fault, nor any fruit of it,

nor was it in our power to prevent it; yet we are ſo fatally intangled in it, that it is next to a miracle to rid ourſelves, in any good meaſure, of its chains. Is not the world diſordered, and ſociety poiſoned, and men's own particular peace and honour miſerably violated, with the baleful effects of the four elements of our *terreſtrial* compoſition? whilſt ſome live, even in this world, in a perpetual *fire*, and are tormented before their time, through the wrathfulneſs and ſtrifes, contentiouſneſs and injurious zeal, which their *Choler* kindles in them; others, on the contrary, are drowned in ſottiſhneſs and ſtupidity, and an utter ineptneſs to all things worthy of a man, by the overflowing of ſtupifying *Phlegm*; a third ſort toſſed about like feathers with light-mindedneſs and admiration of trifles, or wafted into the foul lake of bodily pleaſures by the guſts of reeking *Blood*; a fourth conſumed by that ſlow-devouring *Demogorgon* in the earthy *Melancholy*, in which lodge anxious fear, dark ſuſpicion, and fretting envy. And though you poſſibly may have heard ſome men talk of *liberty* and *free-will*, and a ſovereign power in us to keep all theſe rebellious humours in good order, and that with much eaſe, if we would but give our minds to it; yet if you but conſider whence it is that they talk in that high ſtrain, you will begin to think they reckon without their hoſt and againſt experience. Such men have a ſort of adverſaries, who from the aſſurance of their very ſenſes that there is a great *lapſe* and degeneracy in univerſal mankind, do, without all ceremony, bluntly caſt the cauſe upon *God*, or at beſt aſſign ſuch a reaſon for it as their *antagoniſts* think comes to the ſame; who therefore, out of an abhorrency to ſuch blaſphemy (as they call it) think it better and more pious to deny the truth of a manifeſt obſervation than to make God the author of ſo calamitous a *Phænomenon*. Where by the way you may obſerve, that both ſides, by their earneſt contention, making good *half* of their reſpective opinions, have to the free enquirer and lover of truth facilitated his finding out the true cauſe, which neither contradicts experience, nor is injurious to the glory

glory of the *Almighty*. But granting to theſe contenders for *Free-will* that ſomething of what they plead for is true (as indeed it cannot be denied) I would yet aſk them, whether or no, the condition of our nature conſidered, the ſtrong inclinations in us naturally to that which is evil, and theſe ſtrengthened and further confirmed for ſeveral years before we can come to have any conſiderable uſe of our reaſon, or arrive to any command over ourſelves; laſtly the way and manner how the elections of our *will* are performed, which we never find *free*, where there is a *cuſtom* or *paſſion* againſt it, and how corporeal motions determine the thoughts and paſſions of our mind, I aſk them whether, theſe things being conſidered, it be not hundreds to one odds that we ſhould chuſe the ways of vice rather than virtue. Or let the diſproportion be as little as they can with any colour pretend, they cannot clear the goodneſs and rectitude of divine *providence* by their *hypotheſis*, which thruſts pure and immaculate and moſt innocent ſpirits into ſo great danger of being defiled and corrupted by the paſſions of the *body*, and of ſeverely ſuffering for it hereafter. But for my own part, I think the obſervation of their adverſaries is much the truer, that the diſproportion is exceeding great; for ſince the ways of holineſs and virtue are ſo full of peace and unſpeakable contentment, and ſhine with ſo raviſhing and irreſiſtible pulchritude to prepared minds, and do ſo perfectly correſpond to all the ſenſes of ſo happy a temper, that we are fully aſſured our Soul is then as ſhe ſhould be, and in conjunction with her moſt proper good; I cannot ſee why men ſhould univerſally take the contrary courſe, and that with ſo much paſſion as they do, jeering at thoſe who have made the better choice, as mad-men and fools, if there was any *liberty* in them worth ſpeaking of to virtue and piety. 'Tis true indeed, there is great variety as to *degree* in the backwardneſs of men to goodneſs and virtue, and proneneſs to that which is evil; yet thoſe who have the care and nurture of youth (fathers, ſchoolmaſters, and tutors) do with one conſent affirm that they frequently have

ſome in their charge, who from their earlieſt years are of ſo inexpugnable a propenſion to that which is naught, ſo wretchleſs and inſenſible of all wholeſome counſels, and have their eyes ſo perfectly ſealed up, and their hearts ſo frozen to all impreſſions of virtue and ſobriety, that you may as well read lectures of temperance to a goat or a boar, and as ſucceſsfully teach goodneſs and pity and kindneſs to a bear robbed of her whelps, or tiger inraged with hunger, as think to faſten any ſuch things upon their blind and obdurate minds. Whence is this ſtrange *phænomenon*? If the ſoul was not in the world before it was born upon earth, it is not conceivable how it ſhould, in ſo little a time, contract ſo peremptory an affection to vice amidſt thoſe continual chidings and reproofs, thoſe ſharp and painful corrections, thoſe ſeveral ways of ignominious puniſhments it meets with, thoſe advantageous repreſentations made to it of that which is good and laudable; thoſe many and earneſt invitations and allurements to embrace it, with all other methods of a good and prudent inſtitution. That it comes pure and undefiled out of the hands of the Creator all grant; and be this pureneſs what it will, whether with or without thoſe *natural notions* of what is *good* and *honeſt*, the buſineſs will be much the ſame. For if the *latter* way be the truth, even this negative purity will leave it in an indifferency to virtue or vice; and therefore, if its firſt precepts and earlieſt inculcations be good and virtuous, it would be formed unto virtue; which is ſo far from happening to ſome (though the very ſame inſtruction to others proves ſucceſsful) that they, on the contrary, impatient of every curb and rein, and deaf to all calls and charms, run headlong into all iniquity. If the *former* way be true, it would be ſtill more wonderful how its firſt appearing inclinations ſhould ſo eagerly carry it to that which is vicious, contrary to the poſitive reſtraint of its inward light. But if they ſay (as they generally do) that the ſoul itſelf is pure and immaculate, but that it contracts this unreclaimable proclivity to vice from the body it is put into, beſide the ignorance they diſcover

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by ſo ſaying in the ſpeculation of things, in joining ſuch ill-agreeing mates together into one vital compoſition, where *ſympathy* and *congruity* is the only *vinculum*, the *Father* aſks them how it is conſiſtent with the goodneſs and righteouſneſs of God, the bleſſed ſpring of all virtue and holineſs, and tender lover of all his creatures, to put ſuch innocent ſouls into ſuch foul and untamed *bodies*, which ſo fatally and neceſſarily hurry them to that which alone of all things in the world he diſapproves of, and which he knows will be their utter bane and miſerable ruin. And therefore, upon the whole of this *ſecond* part of his argument from *Providence*, he concludes, that ſince ſo great a part of our pitiable bondage to vice and paſſion in the judgment of all ſides proceeds from theſe *bodies* of ours, if the ſoul was merely paſſive in being born into this world, and *was* not before it was born here, much of the calamity it ſuffers from vice, for which it muſt ſuffer more hereafter, muſt, in his judgment, be caſt upon God; which he thinks is impious to affirm, and utterly contradictious to his holy attributes.

A *third* argument of his I find in St. *Jerome*, from the miſbecomingneſs of the contrary poſition, which makes the bleſſed *Majeſty* of Heaven and earth diligently wait upon unclean embraces. Which monſtrous *indecorum*, though *coarſer ſpirits are not ſenſible of*, and think they have anſwered the argument by thoſe mean compariſons of the ſun's ſhining upon dunghills as well as flowery meads, and ſtolen ſeeds growing as well as that which the ſower came juſtly by; yet it was exceedingly harſh to the more *delicate ſenſe of Origen*'s mind, and not to be put off by ſuch ſlight and ill-fitting ſimilitudes. 'Tis a ſhrewd ſign *that* ſoul is much diſcompoſed in her *harmonical nature*, who hath ſo far loſt her ſenſe of *proportionateneſs* and *congruity*, as either not to think this is a very humble office to the ſupreme *Deity*; or if it be ſo, not to feel in herſelf a great reluctance to the making God ſo particular an executor of it.

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If they imagined all things were made and ordered by ſuch ſettled laws of nature as might in ſome ſenſe be called neceſſary, this *indecorum* would be more tolerable; but to make God work all things in an expreſs and voluntary way, and with his own hands, as it were, and yet to fancy ſo *ſpecial* an interpoſal of his will and power in ſo abhorred an occaſion, is to be very bold with the ſovereign *Majeſty* on high, and to make him do that which they themſelves, were it in their power, would be aſhamed to do. And what contrariety would it be to any of the divine attributes, or what loſs to the world, if God did not appear in ſuch unlawful inchoations of life, but let them come to nought in the end, as they were without his approbation begun? But the true judgment of this argument, as I intimated above, is the *inward touch of a man's mind*; which in you I know to be ſo comely and graceful, that at the firſt propoſal you felt the force of it, and need not that I further inlarge upon it.

ARGUMENT III.

Though Scripture no where particularly and plainly teaches us when the ſoul was *firſt* produced and came into being, yet there are ſome paſſages in it which favour *its pre-exiſtence*. *I have glorified thee on earth, I have finiſhed the work thou gaveſt me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own ſelf, with that glory I had with thee before the world was.* In which *text* theſe two things are plainly enough intimated, the exiſtence of the *ſubject* of this glory, prayed for before the world was, and an interciſion of this glory for a while and recuperation of it again; the former whereof though it be true of the Divine λογος, yet the latter is incompetible to him. And the event plainly ſhews the *ſubject* of this glory; for he that humbled himſelf to the death of the croſs, was exalted by God to be the ſovereign *prince* of men and angels; and he that was made in the likeneſs of man or ſinful fleſh in a *vile body*,

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was inveſted with power to change our vile bodies into the ſimilitude of his *glorious* body. *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. His diſciples ſaid unto him, Lo, now ſpeakeſt thou plainly, and ſpeakeſt no parable.*

And certainly ſomething in favour of this opinion may be made of that queſtion of the diſciples to our Saviour concerning the man that was born blind; for either he approved of the common opinion as true, or at leaſt thought it very harmleſs if falſe, ſince having ſo fair an occaſion of rectifying the common belief, he yet ſaid nothing againſt it. I know indeed that the *ſilence* of Scripture, and the arguments from thence which they call *negative*, are eſteemed of little force in diſputation, unleſs in ſome certain caſes. But he that ſhall ſeriouſly conſider how great a change does neceſſarily follow in the whole frame of chriſtian religion, from the beginning to the end of it, by the taking in or leaving out this opinion of *pre-exiſtence*, may poſſibly be induced to think that our Saviour's ſaying nothing in ſo apt an occaſion, is one of thoſe caſes wherein *ſilence* is almoſt as argumentative as a poſitive approbation.

Parables likewiſe will not be taken for arguments; which is no ill *rule*, if underſtood of the minute circumſtance of them, and of ſuch parts as the *decorum* of an *apologue* requires; but certainly the *whole* will argue as well as inſtruct. But I lay no ſtreſs upon them, becauſe they may have other true and ſober interpretations; yet I thought good to caſt them in for variety ſake, that you may ſee how congruouſly they may be applied to the doctrine we are upon. The prodigal ſon's leaving his father, you know, is deſcribed by his *going into a far country*, and there waſting his ſubſtance with riotous living; and in his return his father ſays of him, this

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my ſon *was dead*, but is *alive again*, was loſt, but is found. *The Son of man is come* [from Heaven] *to ſave that which was loſt. If a man have an hundred ſheep, and one of them go aſtray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and ſeeketh that which is gone aſtray? For ye were as ſheep going aſtray, but are now returned to the ſhepherd and biſhop of your ſouls. I am the good ſhepherd, not an hireling whoſe* own *the ſheep are not.* You may conſider theſe places alſo, though they do not at all belong to this head of *Parables: I am not ſent, but* εις τα προβατα τα απολωλοτα—*and not for that nation only, but that he ſhould gather together in one* τα τεκνα τυ Θευ τα διεσκορπισμενα—*and having made peace by the blood of his croſs, by him to reconcile all things unto himſelf, whether things* in Heaven, *or things* in earth. *Dearly beloved brethren, I beſeech you as* ſtrangers *and* pilgrims *abſtain from fleſhly luſts which war againſt the ſoul——and confeſſed that they were* ſtrangers *and* pilgrims upon earth. This may ſerve to let you ſee that the *father* had very probable reaſons for his *ſecond* opinion.

His *third* is this, That theſe *pre-exiſting ſouls*, through their fault and negligence, became inhabitants of the earth in *terreſtrial* bodies.

An opinion which he grounds upon theſe conſiderations.

In that long chain of life and being, propagated from the higheſt to the loweſt of all, from the moſt *incorporeal* Deity to *matter* itſelf, 'tis not to be wondered at, nay, 'tis neceſſary, that many of the *intermediate* eſſences ſhould partake of both the extremes, and ſo there be brought into light *ſpirits incorporate*. But ſince few ſpirits after the *firſt* and *beſt* are of immutable purity, and ſince every different degree of their changable purity is proportioned to a correſpondent degree of purity in matter, and ſince matter is actually exiſtent

iſtent in the world according to all degrees of purity, 'tis not to be wondered at neither, that the ſame individual ſpirit, or ſame order of ſpirits, ſhould be ſometimes united with one ſort of matter, ſometimes with another.

But whatever happened to them afterwards, through the mutability of their nature, we may be aſſured from that *infinite goodneſs* which produced them, that they were at firſt joined to the pureſt matter, and placed in the beſt regions of the world, that the higheſt life and purity of eſſence they then had, made them fit for. The *ſouls* of men are *one* order of theſe *eſſentially-incorporate ſpirits*, as both their deep immerſion into *terreſtrial* matter, the modification of all their operations by it, and the *heavenly body* promiſed us in the Goſpel, as the higheſt perfection of our recovered nature, do ſufficiently argue. And therefore, if our ſouls did exiſt before they appeared inhabitants of the earth, the ſediment of the corporeal world, they did exiſt in a purer element, to which an higher degree of life, and purer operations, and conſequently greater happineſs, did belong. Who then ſhould turn them out of that better condition, in which the order and courſe of nature, and the internal congruity of their own eſſence, had placed them? Certainly not *he* whoſe overflowing goodneſs firſt brought them into life and being, and who, no doubt, in the firſt moment of their exiſtence, ſet them to exerciſe thoſe powers of life he had given them, in thoſe parts of the world as were moſt advantageous for the happineſs they were capable of. And though they ſhould, through the lapſability of their nature, fall from this eminent pitch of primitive felicity, to a ſtate leſs happy and perfect, yet this ſtate being not the loweſt and worſt of all, and that ſame *goodneſs* which firſt made them, and always governs them, being undiminiſhable, it is almoſt as harſh to think he would precipitate them from this ſomething-better condition into that which is the moſt miſerable of all, as that he did

originally create them in ſuch a condition as was far worſe than what he then judged them capable of. And to think that any other external cauſe could do it by force and violence, is very *unphiloſophical*, ſince there is an inward maturation of *vital congruity* to be firſt wrought before they be ſo much as capable of uniting with this or that element, much leſs of living in it as a ſeat and habitation of a durable life; beſides, it ſeems inconſiſtent with that moſt wiſe and gracious *Providence* which governs the world, that any thing ſhould have a power of diſpoſing of any being in it παρα την αξιαν.

What then remains but that through the faulty and negligent uſe of themſelves whilſt they were in ſome better condition of life, they rendered themſelves leſs pure in the whole extent of their powers both intellectual and animal, and ſo by degrees became *diſpoſed* for the ſuſception of ſuch a degree of *corporeal* life as was leſs pure indeed than the former, but exactly anſwerable to their preſent diſpoſition of ſpirit; ſo that after certain periods of time they might become far leſs fit to actuate any ſort of matter than the *terreſtrial?* And being originally made with a capacity to join with this too, and in it exerciſe the powers and functions of life, it ſeems neceſſary, according to the courſe of nature, that they ſhould ſink into it, and ſo appear *terreſtrial men*. And that this is a very probable cauſe of their becoming inhabitants of the earth, the *learned father* thinks cannot be doubted, if we conſider the neceſſary mutability in created eſſences, the *freedom of will* in human ſouls, and the great ſympathy there is betwixt the *parts* of the ſoul, (for he, according to the *Platonic* doctrine, thinks the ſoul *heterogeneous*, and nothing is more eaſy than to prove that it is ſo.) For, as he often inculcates, goodneſs and truth are not eſſential or *ſubſtantial* in theſe inferior natures, ſo as that they ſhould be in a perpetual contemplation of them, and under that moſt happy conſtraint of never loſing the

the ſight of their glorious forms, and of never ſwerving from their laws; but do in a more accidental way belong unto them, and are efficacious in them only upon certain terms and conditions. From which imperfection of their nature ariſes the *αυτεξουσιον*, freedom of will (for this in ſome ſenſe is no perfection) and by the too great liberty of that power it eaſily happens that they obſerve not thoſe terms and conditions, being drawn away from a preſs and careful attendance to them by converting to the delightful motions of their *congenite* bodies; which delight is both natural, and in ſome degrees allowed; but all corporeal pleaſure having ſomething of confuſion and diſturbance in it, together with a ſtrong *magical* devocation of the animadverſion to the ſenſe of it, they might, in this dark huddle, eaſily loſe the ſight of thoſe bounds and limits beyond which they ought not to proceed in the enjoyment of thoſe pleaſures they reap from corporeal life.

It is very hard for the ſoul, under the preſent actual fruition of what is delightful to it, and meeting with nothing in this its freer indulgency, which by its ſharpneſs may check it, not to be tempted a little and a little further, it feeling a freedom accompanying this its ſecret deſire and inward preſages all along. This unwarrantable liberty is not at firſt ſo free, while the principle of more divine and intellectual life is more intire: but this, by little and little, is weakened by thoſe permiſſions we make unto ourſelves in favour of our natural propenſities to corporeal joy; and ſo the ſuperior life extinguiſhing by degrees, and the inferior more eagerly kindling, we ruſh at laſt, without bounds and meaſure, to take our fill of thoſe pleaſures which the lawleſs motions of the body we are then united with, offer to our corrupted ſenſe.

But whatever aberrations we make from the laws of intellectual life, the ill effect of them is not confined to that chief and *principal*

part of our ſoul wherein that *life* is ſeated, but deſcends from thence and ſpreads its impure contagion through all the *ſeats* of inferior life, by reaſon of that cloſe continuity which is in all the parts of the ſoul. And whatever happens to its principal part, as the *center* of all the reſt, does, in a correſpondent manner, affect theſe which *ray* from that: for as theſe, in their firſt *emanation*, were determinately ſuch or ſuch only, becauſe *that* from whom they proceeded was of ſuch or ſuch a degree of purity and eſſential power; ſo in all the after-mutations which happen, they conſtantly *ſympathize* with one another. For if the *inferior parts* of the ſoul, deſtined unto her meaner functions, do ſo punctually obey the moſt ſtill and ſilent volition or imagination of that which is *ſupreme*, as we plainly find they do in paſſions and ſpontaneous motion; what wonder is it if the preſent frame, habit, and temper of that *ſupreme part* (which is certainly more powerful than a ſingle tranſient command) does mould and form them into a ſuitable temper with itſelf? And therefore if that *central* part, by forſaking the laws of a better life, become ſo impure, that her operations, in this degenerate condition, would not exceed thoſe which may be expected from an *underſtanding* in conjunction with *earthly* matter; the parts *derivative* will neceſſarily be changed into a correſpondent feculency, and ſo the whole ſoul will ſink into *terreſtrial* matter, for which alone it is now fit, and by her *ſeminal reaſons* proper to this ſtate, ſhape it into the fabrick of a *terreſtrial man*.

ARGUMENT IV.

And the *Father* further thinks we ought not to wonder at any thing in this procedure, if we do but read and underſtand what the Holy Scripture teaches us of the ſinning angels, that they kept not their primitive excellency, but left their proper habitations in the regions of heavenly light, and are therefore bound εν τωδε τω ταρταρω,

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with the chains of fuliginous air. For what greater wonder is it that *aerial genii* become *terreſtrial men*, than *ætherial* angels *aerial demons*? But this parity of reaſon is not all the aſſiſtance which *Origen* conceived the Scripture afforded him in this aſſertion. For the ſacred ſtory of *man* in *Geneſis* plainly deſcribes a tranſgreſſion for which he was turned out of *Paradiſe*, and became mortal, as the text ſays. Which hiſtory St. *Paul* carries further in his *Epiſtle* to the *Romans*, and ſays, that *as by one man ſin entered into the world, and by ſin death and mortality; ſo alſo did this death and mortality go through all men, becauſe* or *ſo far as all have ſinned*; or in his own words, more elegantly, Ωσπερ δι ενος ανθρωπου η αμαρτια εις τον κοσμον εισηλθεν, κ᾽ δια της αμαρτιας ο θανατος κ᾽ ουτως εις παντας ανθρωπους ο θανατος διηλθεν εφ᾽ ω παντες ημαρτον. And again, to the *Corinthians*, *As by man death* ——and *As in Adam all die* —— By which places it appears that *Adam* ſinned, and, as a conſequent thereof, became *mortal*; his ſons alſo ſinned, and mortality pervaded them too. Now who this *mortal Adam* is, whoſe image all that bear are likewiſe mortal, the *apoſtle* tells us in the ſame chapter, to wit, chap. xv. The firſt man is of the earth, earthy, ανθρωπος εκ γης, χοικος; therefore we all become χοικοι or *terreſtrial* men by ſin. But ſince we are ſuch from our firſt coming into this world, and the fault muſt needs be before the conſequents of it, that ſin and tranſgreſſion by which we became ſuch muſt be looked for higher or in ſome former ſtate.

I know this concluſion would not be thought by many men rightly deduced from theſe places of Scripture; but this ought to be no prejudice againſt it, if you but remember that the gainſayers are of two ſorts of *divines*; the one thoſe who deny the *original* and general depravation of mankind, the other thoſe who aſcribe all to the will and ſovereignty, or miſtaken juſtice of God, upon occaſion of the perſonal miſcarriage of the *firſt man* that dwelt upon this earth. The firſt of theſe do manifeſt violence (in my apprehenſion) to Scripture,

ture, and contradict experience: the latter groſſly pervert the nature of things, and rudely diſhonour the divine attributes; as might with much eaſe be ſhewn, if I thought it neceſſary to your ſagacious judgment.*

P. S. As the reader, by comparing this *Appendix* with my *Diſſertation* on the Pre-exiſtence and Lapſe, &c. will find a great coincidence of argument in favor of that hypotheſis, I hope he will excuſe my vanity if I take upon me to declare, that I had not either ſeen or heard of this *Account of Origen*, till it was recommended to my peruſal by a learned friend, *after* I had publiſhed the firſt edition of the *Lapſe*.

* Objections to the Father's opinion are ſtated and ſufficiently anſwered by the author of the *Account*, and the annotator on Glanville's Lux Orientalis.

ADDENDA.

ADDENDA.

Reflections arising from the following Queſtion, in Page 74;

"What, I pray thee, were thy Perceptions, and what the State of thy Thoughts, when God faſhioned thee in the Womb, and thou laidſt there ſome Months?"

WHETHER immediately upon conception,* or not till the embryo of the future man is completely formed into a fœtus, the ſoul drops into the the womb, it is not neceſſary, or perhaps eaſy to determine, though the latter ſeems moſt probable; we may, however, reaſonably conclude, that the neceſſary diſpoſition of parts being made for its reception, the ſoul becomes, by a derived power from its Creator, a kind of *ſubordinate architect* of its own manſion, raiſing itſelf, by a conſtant exertion of its plaſtic powers on the *encreaſing* matter (ariſing from a regular ſupply of food) from its *diminutive* form, when iſſuing from the womb, to the *determinate* bulk of man. Agreeably to which, ſays St. Cyprian, *Caro Spiritu* (meaning by *ſpiritu* the *ſoul* moſt undoubtedly) *inſtructa nutritur, adoleſcit, affatur, docet, operatur.* Rigalt. in opuſc. St. Cypr.

* By *conception* I mean the impregnation of the ovum (wherein is contained the firſt rudiments of the human body) by the *ſemen virile*; for a very rational, ſatisfactory illuſtration of which point, I muſt refer the reader to Dr. Parſons's ingenious treatiſe on the analogy between the propagation of animals and vegetables.

And

And to the ſame effect ſpeaks Dr. More——"In every particular world, ſuch as man is, his own ſoul is the peculiar and moſt perfect architect, and being a *ſpirit*, and therefore contractable and dilatable, it begins within leſs compaſs at firſt in organizing the fitly-prepared matter, and ſo bears itſelf on the ſame tenor of work, till the body has attained its full growth, dilates itſelf in dilating the body, and poſſeſſes it through all the members thereof." Vid. More, Immor. b. ii. chap. 10.

A conjecture this, than which there cannot be one more rationally pleaſing, as it ſerves to account ſo ſatisfactorily, not only for the gradual growth of the corporeal frame of man, but for the gradual improvement likewiſe of his intellectual powers and faculties. For till the ſoul can have worked the body up to its proper organization and conformity of parts (which it can only effect by degrees) by virtue of its plaſtic faculty; till, in ſhort, the nerves, and thoſe other more *immediate* inſtruments of ſenſe, motion, and organization, the, *animal ſpirits*, are rendered ſo complete as to be able to tranſmit the impreſſion of ſenſible objects to the brain, wherein centers the perceptive faculty of the ſoul, there muſt of courſe be a debility of both the corporeal and intellectual operations; but neither philoſophy nor common-ſenſe will allow us to conclude, that the ſoul is totally void of ſenſe and reflection, when it enters into and begins its operations upon the corporeal frame, *becauſe* it diſcovers not that ſublimity or extenſiveneſs of reaſoning, to which a more complete organization of its material vehicle (or vivification, rather, of its organic powers) is requiſite.

"I doubt not, ſays Mr. Locke, but children, by the exerciſe of their ſenſes about objects that affect them in the womb, receive ſome few ideas before they are *born*, as the unavoidable effects either of the bodies that environ them, or elſe of thoſe wants or deſires that affect them;

them ;—ſuch as hunger, warmth, &c." B. ii. chap. 9. § 5. And "though the ſoul, ſays a very ingenious modern French writer, aſtoniſhed and ſurprized to find itſelf confined and impriſoned, may, during the firſt days of life, remain in a ſtate of ſtupidity and dulneſs, it does not follow, that ſhe is not properly awake till ſhe begins to reaſon: on the contrary, ſhe is quickly rouſed by the calls of neceſſity; the organs ſoon inform her that they ſtand in need of her orders, and the correſpondence between body and ſoul is eſtabliſhed by means of the reciprocal impreſſions they make on each other. From that inſtant the ſoul broods in ſilence over her faculties, which in due time ſhe properly prepares and brings forth into action. By the help and miniſtry of the eye, the ear, the feeling, and the other ſenſes, ſhe aſſembles a ſet of lights and ideas which ſerve her as proviſions for life; and as it is the *ſentiment* that alone preſides over and directs all theſe acquiſitions, it neceſſarily follows, that it muſt have already made a very conſiderable progreſs, before *reaſon* has begun to exert herſelf, or even taken the firſt ſtep."‡ But to return. The debility and habitude of the ſoul's intellectual powers during infancy (and ſomething ſimilar may perhaps be the caſe with it, when in the womb) Dr. More aſcribes, not irrationally I think, to the then ſtate and condition of the animal ſpirits,* which being, as he ſays, more torpid and watery in children and old men, muſt needs

‡ It gives me no ſmall degree of pleaſure, and even pride, to find my own ſentiments on this ſubject countenanced ſince ſo ſtrongly by ſo extremely ſenſible and ingenious a writer as is the abbot Batteau, from whom the above is taken. Vid. his *Principles of Literature*, tranſlated by Mr. Miller.

* Theſe, though conſidered by ſome as an *imaginary* ſubſtance only, are an actual *fluid* (diſcernable by the microſcopic eye) perpetually emiſſive from and reverſive into its lodgment, within the fourth ventricle of the brain, wherein alſo reſides its chief directrix, the ſoul. And by the inſtrumentality of theſe are performed all the operations of the ſoul, ſenſitive and intellectual, and all thoſe purpoſes for which ſome (abſurdly enough) ſuppoſe a *ſenſitive* ſoul is united to the *rational*.

hinder her in ſuch operations as require another conſtitution of ſpirits; though I will not profeſs myſelf abſolutely confident, ſays he, that the ſoul cannot act without all dependence on matter; but if it does not, which is moſt probable, it muſt needs follow, that its operations will keep the laws of the body it is united to; whence it is demonſtrable, adds he, how neceſſary purity and temperanee is to preſerve and advance a man's parts. Vid. p. 206.

The truth of the laſt of theſe two remarks muſt be obvious to every one, who conſiders how greatly the *operations* of the ſoul depend upon the temper and tenor of thoſe *immediate* inſtruments of reaſon and reflection *here*, *the animal ſpirits*. And how important the conſideration is, not only with reſpect to men's *parts*, but to their *principles* alſo, the following reflections, will abundantly evince, and be not altogether unacceptable, I hope, to the ſpeculative reader.

Thoſe animal ſpirits then, above-mentioned, are a ſecretion of the blood, perpetually ariſing from the heart, which the ſoul is neceſſitated, by her union with the body, to make uſe of in her intellectual as well as ſenſitive operations——I mean in the powers of thought, meditation, reflection, &c. Whatever, therefore, tends moſt to a fuller and more *pure* ſupply of the one gives the ſoul of courſe a proportionably more enlarged and enlivened aptitude for the other. And from a peculiar happy temperature and tenor of the animal ſpirits, with which ſome are naturally furniſhed, it is, that they are poſſeſſed of proportionably quicker, livelier, and brighter parts than others: the ſoul's intellectual operations being by that means more free and diſincumbered, and better adapted for clear, cloſe, ſagacious, and ſolid reaſoning, or for the more copious and exalted efforts of *imagination*, which ever of theſe ſhall happen to be Nature's *peculiar* fort.

And

And as, by means of a different temperature and tenor of the animal ſpirits, men are found to differ from one another with reſpect to their intellectual *powers* and *endowments*, ſo to the like cauſe are we to aſcribe, generally ſpeaking, their difference from each other in point of *temper*, *paſſions*, and intellectual *affections*. The more pure and tenuous the animal ſpirits are, the more *pure* and *pious*, for the moſt part, will be the latter—I mean pure and pious affections will then more eaſily take place—and not only this, but be more permanent, active, and vigorous at the ſame time; as the ſoul will then have a clearer and more ſtriking conception of the beloved object, a more open and free paſſage for its devout aſpirations, a greater ſcope for ſpiritual enlargements, and an eagerneſs therein, that will not eaſily keep clear of extravagance. Hence it is, that *real* piety ſo frequently terminates in *enthuſiaſm*; *that* abſtemious, regular courſe of life, which religioniſts oft preſcribe to themſelves, naturally creating ſuch a temperature of the vital frame in general, and the animal ſpirits, of which we have been ſpeaking, in particular, the ſoul, in that caſe, becomes as it were almoſt wholly intellectual, and in proportion to the *actual* purity and piety of its *affections*, more than *human*;—— when not perverted, I mean, by falſe doctrines, into a glaring *miſapprehenſion* of the Divine Attributes. When *that* is the caſe, which is too frequently the conſequence of a zeal without knowledge, the ſoul, by means of the ſame kind of tenuity and pliability (if I may ſo ſpeak) of the animal ſpirits, will be as naturally carried into an intenſe melancholy.

If then a due temperature and purity of the animal frame is found neceſſary to enable the ſoul to exert her intellectual *powers* and *affections*, with an added freedom, independency, and vigour, what muſt then be the conſequence of a reverſe ſtate? when the blood and ſpirits are defecated by fumes or foul ſecretions from a ſtomach replete with groſs or high-ſeaſoned food, and *rich* wines, &c. neither

parts, purity, nor piety can take place; imagination cannot ſpeed its courſe through ſo foul and corrupt an atmoſphere; pure deſires are overwhelmed by incentives to looſe and unchaſte gratifications; reaſon is dethroned, by the inroad of an army of fleſhly luſts; and the whole man becomes at once totally carnal, ſenſual, deviliſh. A reflection this, which ſuggeſts to my thoughts the propriety with which, in every community, *faſting* is invariably directed to accompany acts of public humiliation, and the neceſſity of attending to the apoſtle's direction, not to make *proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof*, which men neceſſarily do, by an intemperate indulgence in *diet*. But the mind is never ſo fatally affected as when a man falls a ſacrifice to that baneful root of diſorders in the intellectual frame, *ebriety*; for then thoſe immediate inſtruments of thought, *reaſon*, and reflection, the animal ſpirits, being abſorbed, as it were, in the fumes diſtilled from the intoxicating juice, the *man* falls a victim to every irregular, ſenſual, and ſinful appetite. A variety of follies, indiſcretions, and even vile enormities, are the too frequent attendants. His eyes ſhall behold ſtrange women, and his heart ſhall utter perverſe things. Fornication, adultery, murder, are the reſult of this vice daily; and how frequently is that truly-valuable and endearing quality in man, friendſhip, ſwallowed up in it? A ſudden dilatation of the heart enſues, which oftimes betrays him into a diſcloſure of ſecrets of the greateſt conſequence, perhaps, and repoſed in him with the utmoſt confidence. Nor can he, in that ſituation, be even faithful to himſelf. In the ſudden guſts of paſſion, too naturally iſſuing from a diſtempered brain, *ſtifled* enmities, and *lurking* malevolences, all the inward emotions of envy, hatred, malice, and a multitude of deep-laid devices, ſo induſtrioufly concealed before, break from him. And this ſerves to ſhew how much we are miſtaken, in imagining, when a man's temper ſeems altered by the effects of the circulating glaſs, that there is a *creation*, as it were, of ſome *new* paſſion, ſome new-formed diſtemper of the mind? No. The latent

latent *workings* of a miſchievous, malevolent, rancorous heart, aſſume a *confidence*, to which *reaſon*, when not abſorbed by the fumes of liquor, was a ſufficient check before; and the man unwittingly *ſhews* himſelf now in his native, naked, worthleſſneſs. Agreeably to which ſays Plutarch, το εν τη καρδια τυ νηφοντος επι της γλωσσης εςι μεθυοντος. *i. e.* The man *ſpeaks*, when he is drunk, what he dares only *think* when he is ſober.

And again, ſays the Epigram on Ebriety:

Αει θηριον ησθα Πιλυκριτε νυν δε πεπωκως
Εξαπινης εγενυ λυσσαμενες τι κακον.
Αει μοι δωκεεις κακος εμμεναι· Οινος ελεγχει
Τον τροπον, Ουκ εγενυ νυν κακος αλλ' εφανης.

It was not the wine that *made* the bad man, but it was the bad man that *ſhewed* himſelf in the wine.

A DISSERTATION on DREAMS.

IT is altogether as intelligible to ſay, that a body is extended without parts, ſays Mr. Locke, when ſpeaking of the ſoul's *ſleeping*, as that any thing thinks, without being conſcious of it. *Human Underſtanding*, vol. i. p. 77.

That there muſt be a conſciouſneſs of what paſſes in a man's mind, during the very *time* of thinking, it may, perhaps be granted; but that ſuch a train of thinking muſt neceſſarily be followed by an *after-recollection* of the ſubject-matter of the thought, we have proofs to the contrary from men's *dreams*. For there are frequent inſtances of perſons talking, and ſhewing other ſigns of thinking in their ſleep; of which, when awakened, they have remembered nothing. And it is notorious, that many a dream is *awakened* in a man's mind, by the accidental occurrence of ſome ſimilar or relative circumſtances, without which the man would not have *known* that he had dreamed that night at all. Mr. Locke, in ſhort, either deſignedly quibbles, or miſtakenly blunders here moſt egregiouſly, in not making a due diſtinction between *preſent* conſciouſneſs (i. e. a conſciouſneſs of what paſſes in the mind during the *time* of thinking) and an *after recollection* of a man's thonghts. And it gives me great concern to ſee ſo great a man dealing out ſophiſtry, inſtead of ſolid argument, ſo plentifully, in ſupport of a favourite hypotheſis, which he does moſt remarkably in his twelfth and ſome following ſections of the chapter quoted above.

In fact, I cannot help imagining, that the ſoul is, for the moſt part, equally employed in thought, ſleeping as well as waking, with this difference

difference only, that it is, and muſt be, in the former ſtate, exerciſed in ſpeculating *internal* objects only.—I mean images *ſenſitive* or *intellectual*, internally impreſſed on the ſenſorium *before*——whereas, waking, it has the power of taking in external objects alſo. All the avenues for a freſh ſupply of *external* objects being ſhut up in ſleep, the mind can only employ itſelf in the contemplation of ſuch as are within, with the ſeveral detached impreſſes conveyed to the brain, by the inſtrumentality of the outward organs of ſenſe when awake. By which means the ſoul has ſuch an *imaginary* ſenſe of things, as muſt neceſſarily appear real, till ſhewn to be otherwiſe, by external demonſtrations from the awakened organs of ſenſe and reflection. Hence it is, that the *dead* are ſo frequently made to live again in the *imagination*; that *paſt* converſations become *preſent*; and that we are made to act, as it were, a redoubled and repeated life. Hence it is, that things improbable, and even things impoſſible, appear, in a manner, *real*—that yon cobler in his ſtall ſhall be a king in his bed, and the enamoured Damon in the *preſence* of his lovely Phillis, at an hundred miles diſtance from her. The dreaming imagination, in ſhort, makes reaſon to entertain the fond idea, of which the *awakened* mind only diſcovers the illuſion.

What the *line* and *rule* are to the maſon, or other mechanic, the organic powers of the body are to the mind. The former give the workmen an *experimental* knowledge of what, *without* them, they would have only an *ideal* or *conjectural*, and that moſt frequently, and of conſequence, an erroneous one. In like manner, the *experience* ariſing to the mind, from time to time, by the inſtrumentality of the *waking* organs of ſenſe, is that *rule* of right, by which we are enabled to diſtinguiſh *real* exiſtences from imaginary ones. It is not to be wondered, therefore, if, when the ſoul lies drowned, as it were, in the *deep* of ſleep, that the various detached *ideas* of kings, coblers, friends, foes, ſports, paſtimes, frolicks, follies, pains, pleaſures

ſures, horſes, towns, harbours, mountains, rivers, &c. &c. floating upon the ſurface of the imagination, ſeparately attract, at times, the ſoul's attention. The *images* of things being *preſent* to the mind, the *man* himſelf ſeems, for the time, *preſent* too. The *perceptions* of the impreſſions made, when awake, on the ſenſorium, are as real as if the *objects* really exiſted; the ſoul takes them for *real*, it acts and behaves as if they were real. So that a man may be a monarch in his ſleep, to all intents and purpoſes,* *excepting* only that the *experience of ſenſe*, when he is awake, convinces him that he is not—not *really*, though he was *ideally* ſo before. He then *ſees* and *hears* that he is no monarch; the avenues to which ſenſible demonſtrations were ſhut, or locked up before, in ſleep.†

* Το γαρ ως υπαρ ειδεν ονειρον. Moſch.

† A very ingenious writer reſolves the phenomenon of dreams into the agency of *ſeparate ſpirits*; but in this, though in other reſpects a moſt engaging writer and ſolid reaſoner, he is moſt egregiouſly miſtaken. Vid. The Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul.

That thoſe various prophetic, &c. dreams among the people of old, and of whom Scripture makes mention, were infuſed by the agency of ſeparate ſpirits, and that ſomewhat of a ſimilar nature, and from a ſimilar cauſe, may have been not unfrequently experienced by numbers in life ſince, we have abundant reaſons to conclude. But what I contend for is, that thoſe incoherent, extravagant, &c. dreams, with which the mind is ſo often and uſually buſied in ſleep, are not, as I apprehend, effected by the agency of ſeparate ſpirits, but created as mentioned above.

An

An Enquiry into the ſeparate Efficacy of Faith *and* Good Works, *with reſpect to Man's* final Salvation.

INtroductory to that *final ſtate of bliſs*, in reſerve for the righteous, there will be an entrance into *Chriſt's kingdom*; * and the prime fundamental requiſites for a participation of that important privilege, are,

Firſt, What the Scripture terms *juſtification*; and

Secondly, *Sanctification*, or true *holineſs*.

By *juſtification* we are to underſtand a diſcharge from the penalty of *original* ſin, through the all-ſufficient merits of Chriſt, *who died for our ſins and roſe again for our juſtification.*

Sanctification implies that acquiſition of moral purity and holineſs, which the Goſpel enjoins, and without which the Apoſtle informs us *no man ſhall ſee the Lord.*

This being admitted, the perplexed diſpute, whether faith, *with* or *without* works, can be available to our *juſtification*, drops at once; as the queſtion ſhould rather be, whether they are or are not *ſeparately* effectual to our *final ſalvation?* and the anſwer is obvious. That we are *juſtified*, i. e. cleanſed from the guilt of *original* ſin, by a firm faith in Chriſt, *independently* of any merit in ourſelves, or

* Vid. Conjectures concerning the *nature* of that kingdom, in the Diſſertation on Predeſtination, &c. p. 29.

of *good works*, we have reiterated declarations from holy writ; but then, in order to render that *juſtification* productive, of our *final ſalvation*, we muſt add to our faith works—muſt walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called---muſt cleanſe ourſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and the ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God.

Men are wont to place *juſtification* and man's *final ſalvation* in one and the ſame point of view, as if they were in reality one and the ſame thing, or the one naturally, and of neceſſity, lead to the other; which is not the caſe. For the Apoſtle St. Paul evidently ſuppoſes, that thoſe who had been once enlightened—απαξ φωτισθεντας—had embraced the Chriſtian faith—obtaining by it a *juſtification* from original ſin, and had *taſted of the heavenly gift, and had been made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt*---He ſuppoſes, I ſay, that ſuch may *fall back into perdition.*

In ſhort, by *juſtification* attainable, as I ſaid before, *ſolely* by a firm *faith in Chriſt*, our *attainder*, as prior *rebels*, by *original ſin*, is revoked, and leave given us to become *candidates* for a ſtation in Chriſt's kingdom, through which we are to paſs to our *final ſtate* of glory; but to be *completely qualified* for an *entrance* therein, we muſt add to that *faith* a ſufficiency of *good works.*

FINIS.

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